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ABSTRACT

Upward mobility programs in the service sector for low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, and dislocated or displaced workers promote employment security, career development, and productivity. Two basic types of upward mobility programs are basic and job-specific skills training. Although 60-80 percent of all employer-sponsored formal training in service industries is provided on site, companies have a growing interest in using external resources. Traditionally, labor and management have viewed worker training as the purview of the employer. Union-sponsored programs are expanding their scope. Program availability is related to business characteristics; company size seems to have an overriding influence. Training programs specifically designed for the worker groups studied are relatively scarce. Three conditions contribute to program success: (1) availability of adequate training resources and management support; (2) labor and/or worker involvement in program design and implementation; and (3) joint labor-management cooperation in program design and operation. Factors that impede successful outcomes include requirements for workers to commit their own time to participate, additional expenses related to training, the stigma attached to remedial training, and lack of monetary rewards. The private sector needs to explore strategies to overcome the lack of resources for worker training, corporations need to promote a positive organizational culture, and the Federal Government needs to support efforts to develop upward mobility programs. (330 references) (YLB)

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UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS IN THE SERVICE SECTOR FOR DISADVANTAGED AND DISLOCATED WORKERS

VOLUME I: FINAL REPORT

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UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS IN THE SERVICE SECTOR FOR DISADVANTAGED AND DISLOCATED WORKERS

VOLUME I: FINAL REPORT

May 1992

Report Number 91-06A

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PREFACE

This report presents a description of upward mobility programs in the service sector for low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, and dislocated workers. Its purpose is to examine the extent to which these workers have opportunities in programs that promote employment security and career development. The study focuses on the service sector because it has become a dominant component of the U.S. labor market, creating over 20 million more jobs since 1980 than the manufacturing, mining, and agriculture sectors combined.

As the report indicates, disadvantaged and dislocated workers continue to have somewhat limited access to training and career development opportunities in the service sector. Program participation for these workers is often contingent on the availability of public funding, namely resources available under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

The study found that upward mobility programs are generally targeted toward entry-level workers, regardless of whether they are economically disadvantaged or dislocated workers. To the extent such programs apply to all employees, including those entering unskilled jobs, they are likely to serve both disadvantaged and dislocated workers.

The study further reveals that sharpening workers' communication and interpersonal skills, in addition to their technological skills, is particularly emphasized in service industries where employee-client interaction is extremely important. Moreover, formal career ladder programs are more often found in those industries in which employee-client interaction is the "product", or at least an integral aspect of it, such as hotels and restaurants.

Those companies most likely to have successful upward mobility programs are large, growing organizations that have ample training resources and labor/management involvement in the design and implementation of the program.

This report was prepared by Fu Associates, Ltd. of Arlington, Virginia. On behalf of the Commission, I want to thank the authors and all the individuals in the service sector who assisted Fu Associates in carrying out this research.

JOHN C. GARTLAND
Chairman

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this report is to describe upward mobility programs in the service sector for disadvantaged and dislocated workers. Specifically, the report addresses the following topics:

- The types of service firms that are likely to have upward mobility programs;
- General characteristics of these programs and how they vary in different types of firms;
- Factors that contribute to program success; and
- Factors that hinder development of upward mobility programs.

The descriptions focus on career mobility opportunities for workers who are in any one or more of the three groups described below:

- Low-skilled workers that constitute a large group of persons with limited work-related training, who are found at low levels of the occupational ladder, and who have limited access to job rewards;

- Economically disadvantaged groups including, but not limited to, working-age individuals whose income is near or below government poverty criteria; and

- Dislocated workers who either have been, or are likely to be, laid off from their jobs.

Upward mobility programs refer to corporate policies and procedures designed to provide workers with career development opportunities. They may include information about promotion opportunities and practices such as job rotation, formalized training, apprenticeship and certification programs, job posting, and succession planning. Such upward mobility programs emphasize career development and are thereby distinguished from educational programs that focus on teaching specific job skills.

For this report, the service sector includes: transportation and public utilities; wholesale; retail; finance, insurance, and real estate; and general services such as hotels, health, and business services.

B. BACKGROUND

The importance of the service industries in the overall U.S. economy has steadily increased, especially in the last decade. However, labor productivity in the service sector has not kept pace with the growth in its relative contribution to total output and the average rate of productivity increases across industries. Continued U.S. economic growth into the 21st Century depends on a general rebound in labor productivity, especially in the service sector.

Currently, there are hundreds of thousands of workers in service jobs that require relatively low skill levels. The number of these jobs is not expected to grow as much as higher-skill jobs. Therefore, a gap between emerging job requirements and workforce skill levels will result in a

"skilled labor gap" in the service sector. Training workers for positions that are technologically more demanding and financially more rewarding would boost worker productivity and reduce the "skills gap." Although a number of Federally funded programs provide pre-employment services, career upgrading of disadvantaged and dislocated workers falls largely within the domains of corporate management and labor unions.

C. CHARACTERISTICS OF UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS

What are the Program Contents and Objectives?

Upward mobility programs are often discussed in terms of two basic types: (1) job-specific skills training and (2) basic skills training. The content of job-specific skills training varies, reflecting the job tasks associated with particular positions and firms. The training may consist of a formally structured sequence of instructional courses, or of informal working relationships with supervisors or senior co-workers who serve as mentors and teachers of skills that a worker would need to qualify for a higher-level position.

There is also a wide variation in the content of what companies consider "basic skills" training. These programs range from the "3Rs" (reading, writing, and math skills), to areas of creative thinking and problem solving, to higher-level skills such as negotiation and leadership.

Communication and interpersonal skills, as well as literacy and computational skills, are increasingly emphasized as basic job skills in the service sector. There is a growing awareness of the need to raise the quality of employee-customer interaction to sustain a competitive edge in customer-oriented industries. Because service industries "produce" services rather than tangible products, the quality of customer service is crucial to corporate survival. Developing employees' interpersonal and job-specific skills is a cost-effective means of ensuring high quality customer service and reducing employee turnover. This is particularly the case in industries such as accommodations and sales in which the worker-client interaction frequently is the product, or an integral aspect of the product.

Although less common than the types of programs described above, some companies directly or indirectly support employees developing alternative job skills in anticipation of downsizing and layoffs. In some companies, upward mobility opportunities are based primarily on personnel management policies and practices such as well-defined career ladders and eligibility rules in terms of tenure and job performance to apply for promotions. These approaches, however, appear to be exceptions to those that contain varying degrees of basic skills and/or job-specific skills training pertinent to the company.

Where are Workers Trained? Who Does the Training?

On-site vs. off-site training: Between 60% and 80% of all employer-sponsored formal training in service industries (and in manufacturing) is provided on-site. On-site training at the workplace typically assumes one or more of the following forms: on-the-job training (OJT), mentorship and/or apprenticeship, and the use of on-site facilities to conduct classes or seminars. On-site training eliminates the need for workers to travel to training locations. Further, it allows using experienced workers as trainers and training materials related to workers' actual jobs, both

of which facilitate their learning the job-specific skills. In many cases, on-site training is conducted by external trainers from private training firms, proprietary schools, unions, educational institutions, and trade associations.

There is a growing interest among companies to use external resources to develop and administer employee training. Companies can buy generic training packages and have them customized to meet their specific training needs. Several firms, especially small and mid-sized firms, may pool their resources to develop a training program they can share; some enroll workers in general educational courses conducted by public and private educational organizations.

Who Initiates and Manages Upward Mobility Programs?

Traditionally, worker training has been viewed by both labor and management as the purview of the employer, given that it was the employer rather than the workers who derived chief benefits from the results. In these programs, the contents of the training are determined solely by management objectives. The effectiveness of the training is also judged according to the standards, goals and objectives set by management, namely improved job performance and increased productivity.

Union-sponsored programs are expanding their scope. In addition to training aimed at organizing workers and collective bargaining, newer programs include upgrading workers' skills with emphasis on disadvantaged and dislocated workers; a more sophisticated and broader range of instructional methods and content; and use of specialized expertise of non-union trainers.

Joint union-management training programs have several advantages: pooled financial and technical resources, management support and worker involvement, and broader objectives to achieve long-term benefits to both the employers and employees. Key features that distinguish joint training programs from unilaterally sponsored programs include the following:

- Serving a broader target population including displaced and employed workers;
- Extending training beyond the company's internal labor market to the external labor market to maximize workers' employment security; and
- Emphasizing cooperative decision-making with worker participation.

The extent to which a joint program exemplifies these features depends largely on a company's size. Programs in large firms are typically more broad-based and address personal development skills and long-term career planning as well as specific job skill development. Many of the large-scale, jointly-sponsored programs also serve both employed and displaced workers.

What Types of Service Firms Provide Upward Mobility Programs?

The availability of upward mobility programs is related to business characteristics such as size, corporate structure, growth rate, technology, unionization, and employee demographics. The complex interplay of many industry and organizational characteristics affect the nature, scope, and effectiveness of upward mobility programs.

Among these characteristics, company size seems to have an overriding influence on the availability and success of upward mobility programs. Large companies offer more upward mobility opportunities than small firms, mainly due to greater training resources and more complex organizational structures that allow for greater career movement. Although growing organizations generally offer better promotional opportunities, the influence of growth rate on career mobility is limited in smaller firms with fewer resources and simpler organizational structures.

Other factors that are related to the availability of upward mobility programs are also related to company size. For example, larger companies are more likely to be unionized. Labor unions, in turn, provide critical energy and expertise in the design and implementation of many upward mobility programs and program designs that result in benefits to workers as well as the companies.

Specific technology also affects workers' career mobility. In businesses whose technology requires that workers perform simple interchangeable tasks, little training is needed, and promotion is based on seniority rather than performance. In companies whose workers perform highly complex and specialized tasks, career advancement follows vertical movements within specific professional tracks. Technological changes may lead to significant organizational restructuring and to new job skills requirements for the workers. Such changes may either increase or decrease career advancement opportunities for workers in any given type of position.

In labor-intensive industries such as the hospitality industry, a firm's product is customer-oriented service, often requiring knowledge of the company and skills in interpersonal communication and problem-solving. Since these skills are best developed over time within the specific corporate environment, these industries tend to be at the cutting edge of worker training and career development.

Finally, external factors such as employment-related legislation, domestic economic expansion and labor shortage, and foreign trade and technological competition, singly or in combination, serve as the catalyst for businesses to provide internal career development opportunities to retain existing workers.

What is the Overall Availability of Upward Mobility Programs in the Service Sector?

Corporate training efforts appear to be unevenly distributed across industries and type of workers. Estimates of the training dollars that U.S. businesses spend each year range from $30 billion to $44 billion. Even the higher estimate, $44 billion, represents only 1.8% of all dollars spent for worker compensation in 1988. While a few companies budget as much as 5% of their payroll for formal training, most do not have a training budget. Limited training efforts are particularly prevalent among small companies. In fact, lack of resources is cited as the primary reason for insufficient corporate support for upgrading workers' skills and promoting their career development.

The estimates of these training budgets include all training by all types of companies for all types of workers. When the focus is narrowed to just service industries and low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, or dislocated workers, the level of training resource allocation appears very limited.

Further, little is known about the availability, effects, or cost of other types of upward mobility programs such as career pathing and job rotation.

Companies with few or no upward mobility programs lack many of the factors that contribute to program implementation, such as sufficient corporate resources, management support, union and/or worker involvement, and effective labor-management cooperation. Companies that make the least effort to increase the skills and promote the careers of disadvantaged and dislocated workers are typically small businesses whose primary concern is survival in a competitive business environment. Developing the productivity of human capital is not a high priority for many small companies.

On the other hand, some large companies such as department store chains and those in the transportation industry also seem to provide minimal upward mobility programs for low-skilled, entry-level workers. This may be due to factors such as the following:

- Low skill requirement of many service jobs,
- Relatively greater impact of the current recession on certain industries,
- Current availability of workers willing to accept low wages, and
- Organizational structure in some industries that limits options for career mobility.

What Types of Workers Are Targeted for Upward Mobility Programs?

Training programs specifically designed for the worker groups discussed in this report are relatively scarce. Many employer-sponsored programs for employee "upward mobility" focus on management training of workers who already possess the requisite educational credentials and employment experience to place them on an advanced technical managerial track. The remaining programs tend to be designed for entry-level workers, regardless of whether they are economically disadvantaged or dislocated workers. These programs are also available to entry-level workers in unskilled jobs (e.g., dish washers, housekeeping staff in hotels).

What Factors Facilitate or Impede Program Success? How Do These Factors Influence Program Outcomes?

Many factors that affect the availability of upward mobility programs generally can also be interpreted as factors contributing to program success. The following three conditions support achieving program objectives:

- Availability of adequate training resources (financial and personnel) and management support of training programs;

- Labor and/or worker involvement in the design and implementation of training programs; and

- Joint labor-management cooperation in program design and operation.

Factors that impede successful outcomes include:

- Requirements for workers to commit their "own" time to participate in training, which is particularly difficult for those with more than one job;
- Additional expenses related to training, such as tuition, transportation, childcare;
- Stigma attached to remedial training; and
- Lack of monetary rewards associated with training.

For many dislocated workers, low self-esteem and increased emotional stress associated with dislocation lead to resistance to training and other support services.

What Are the Program Outcomes for Employees? For Employers?

For employees, advancement opportunities affect their attitudes toward the organization and their work, leading to increased morale and job commitment. Thus, program success can be assessed through worker job performance. Training and development programs that enhance workers' skills also increase the likelihood of their continued employment within or outside the present firm.

The employer's primary objective for upward mobility programs is the economic gain achieved through increased labor productivity. Employers also look for less direct indicators of productivity gains such as workers' increased basic skills and reduced expenses of recruiting and training new hires resulting from lower personnel turnover.

Efforts to assess the effectiveness of existing programs present major challenges. There is considerable debate concerning what to measure and how to measure it. A lack of systematic research on economic returns to upward mobility programs may be due to measurement difficulties as well as the attitude of training managers about the costs of assessing program effectiveness. Qualitative measures such as reports of focus groups and attitude surveys of employers and employees have been suggested as short-term alternatives to more definitive measures of program effectiveness. These methods can also be used to guide program development.

D. ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Exemplary cases of upward mobility programs are found among expanding service sector industries. Nevertheless, **the pervasive nature of limited access by the disadvantaged and dislocated workers to career mobility opportunities should be at the forefront of policy decisions related to workforce productivity and welfare. Training experts warn that only large-scale restructuring of the nation's overall job-training system will ultimately reverse this situation.**

The substantial growth in the number of jobs in the service sector occurred largely among small businesses. However, many of these businesses have limited resources to support employee

training. This situation, coupled with government budget constraints, creates difficult challenges in finding ways to reduce skills gap, increase labor productivity, maintain a competitive edge for the U.S. economy, and promote the welfare of its workforce. These challenges require creative approaches to maximize the resources that are available.

First, additional inquiries are needed to address questions such as the following:

- What are the returns to various types of career ladder programs and when are they available to employees?
- Who should be responsible for worker training and cost accountability?
- What will be the structure and business strategy of organizations in the future and the role of training and development to support them?
- Conversely, what changes in the organizational structure and policies will be needed to support skills and career development of disadvantaged and dislocated workers?
- What are appropriate methods for assessing the effectiveness of specific upward mobility programs?

This report suggests several avenues for enhancing private sector efforts to develop upward mobility programs, and the government support of such efforts.

1. **The private sector needs to explore strategies to overcome the lack of resources for worker training**. Lack of adequate resources is cited repeatedly as the main barrier to program implementation, especially among small businesses. Examples of innovative strategies include:

    - Pooling of resources by a consortium of businesses to develop training programs that can be offered to workers in similar positions from all participating companies;
    - Computer assisted training that reduces the cost of instructors, and provides greater flexibility in scheduling and identifying a location for training;
    - Integrating worker training with government-funded pre-employment programs such as Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Program (JOBS) to capitalize on publicly funded recruitment and applicant screening; and
    - Collaborative efforts among related businesses, education and training organizations, and public employment training programs to maximize available resources and avoid "reinventing the wheel."

2. **Corporate strategies to promote a positive organizational culture may include the following:**

    - Incorporate worker and/or union input in the design, implementation, and administration of worker training programs;

    - Ensure dissemination of information on available training and career ladder policies to workers in the target groups;

    - Link completion of training with promotion opportunities, increased earnings, or other benefits; and

    - Provide ancillary support to minimize the cost to workers of participating in training (e.g., child care).

3. **Federal government support for information dissemination, innovative program approaches, and evaluation research will enhance private sector efforts to expand upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers.** Specific areas of support include the following:

    - Systematic compilation of information on skills and career development training, and dissemination to businesses and the education/training community;

    - Information sharing among businesses through organizations such as local Private Industry Councils (PICs), such government agencies as the Small Business Administration, relevant private sector organizations, and trade associations;

    - Promoting labor/management collaboration regarding the design and implementation of training programs in industries;

    - Funding for demonstration projects to implement innovative upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers, particularly in small and mid-sized businesses, and dissemination of information of the results;

    - Funding to leverage collaborative/consortium efforts among businesses;

    - Funding to extend the training and job placement activities of JTPA in support of training for upward mobility;

    - Policies that provide incentives (such as tax credits) for employee training in order to promote employer-supported upward mobility programs; and

    - Evaluation research to assess the effectiveness of upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers in service industries.

Service industries face tremendous challenges in taking the lead role to restore and maintain the health of the U.S. economy. Although efforts to increase the productivity of low-skilled workers

and to enhance their career opportunities are limited, there is an increasing awareness in the private and public sectors of the need to improve this situation.

PART I: INTRODUCTION

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

This report presents descriptions of upward mobility programs in the service sector for three overlapping groups of workers: low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, and dislocated or displaced.[1]

The low-skilled and semi-skilled workers represent the broadest category of disadvantaged workers. They include a large group of persons who are typically young and untrained and who have little or no prior work experience. Frequently, they possess a high school diploma or less. The economically disadvantaged group includes, but is not limited to, work-age individuals whose income is below government poverty criteria or who are members of families receiving government assistance.

Dislocated or displaced workers have been defined in various ways. Typically, they are workers who either have been or expect to be laid off from their jobs.[2] Dislocation can occur for a variety of reasons including general or industry-specific economic downturns, international competition, and technological change. In this report, "disadvantaged and dislocated workers" refer to individuals who fall into any one or more of the three worker groups.

This report's primary function is to address existing opportunities in the service sector that promote employment security, career development, and productivity of these workers. More specifically, this report presents information relevant to the following questions:

- What types of programs exist?
  - In what types of service industries and firms?
  - For what types of worker groups?
- What are the program outcomes for employees? For employers?
- What factors facilitate or impede program success?
- How do these factors influence program outcomes?

B. CHANGING ECONOMY AND LABOR MARKET

This report focuses on the service sector because it has become a dominant component of the U.S. labor market. Since 1980, service industries have produced over 20 million jobs beyond that produced by manufacturing, mining, and agriculture combined. The recent rapid growth in total employment for the major service categories is shown in Table 1.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), service jobs accounted for 78% of all jobs in the U.S. in 1990. Projections for the labor market to the year 2000 predict that employment will be increasingly dominated by services; in fact, services will account for over 90% of the new jobs created between now and the year 2000.[3]

Within the service sector, growth has not been uniform -- it has varied considerably by industry. For example, the accommodations industry has experienced a marked expansion within the last

two decades. This industry is largely comprised of hotels, motels, and food services. Within food services, eating and drinking establishments and food stores (all considered retail operations) grew 87% between 1973 and 1985.[4] On the other hand, industries such as finance, insurance and real estate (32%); transportation (8%); and communications and public utilities (15%) have experienced much slower growth.[5]

Table 1. Employment Change 1979-1989 in Service Producing Industries (Number of Jobs Estimated in Thousands)

Industry	1979	1989	Percentage (Change)
Transportation and Public Utilities	**5,136**	**5,705**	**11.1**
Trucking and warehousing	1,339	1,660	24.0
Electric, gas, and sanitary services	806	936	16.1
Wholesale Trade	**5,204**	**6,234**	**19.8**
Retail Trade	**14,989**	**19,575**	**30.6**
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	**4,975**	**6,814**	**37.0**
Credit agencies, non-bank	554	908	63.9
Insurance carriers	1,200	1,468	22.3
Services	**17,112**	**26,892**	**57.2**
Hotels	1,059	1,603	51.4
Business services	2,905	5,789	99.3
Amusement and recreation services	712	976	37.1
Health	4,993	7,635	52.9

Source: Monthly Labor Review, September, 1990, Table 2, pp. 8-9.

Large increases are expected in the coming decade in the number of jobs in service occupations such as cooks, nurses' aides, waiters, secretaries, clerks, computer operators, and cashiers. In contrast, the number of jobs requiring the lowest skill levels (e.g., garbage collectors, transport workers, bus persons, dishwashers, stockpersons) will grow at a slower rate than other service sector occupations. Hundreds of thousands of workers who are currently employed in these low-skill jobs may find little opportunity for advancement, either by training and increasing their productivity or by changing to a higher-paying job.

Along with these economic changes, marked demographic changes are expected to magnify challenges to boost the U.S. economy, as well as to ensure a satisfactory quality of life for its workforce. The major demographic changes include the following:[6]

- There has been a relative decline in the number of new workers, especially young workers, entering the workforce. Labor force growth rates will drop from 2.9% per year in the 1970s to only 1% per year in the 1990s.

- An increasing share of new workers (over 30%) are represented by previous homemakers, recent immigrants, minority groups, and others with relatively low employment training and job-related skills. It is estimated that from 4 million to 6.8 million immigrants will enter the U.S. labor force by the year 2000; this population of workers will form an increasing proportion of the U.S. labor supply. Moreover, the rates of poverty tend to be higher among

minority groups. For example, data from BLS estimate that 35.7% of blacks and 28.4% of the Hispanic population fall below the poverty level, compared to only 12.1% of the white population.

C. A CRITICAL NEED: MAXIMIZING HUMAN RESOURCES

While the service sector has gained importance in the overall U.S. economy, worker productivity has not kept pace. This weak productivity growth may be attributed, at least in part, to the enormous influx of new workers that occurred during the 1970s. A large portion of these new workers were women with children and young people willing to work for relatively low wages. Their availability dampened corporate incentives to invest in the development of advanced labor-saving technology in service industries such as food service, health care, and education.

U.S. economic growth into the 21st Century depends heavily on a rebound in productivity, especially in the service sector. Achieving this objective may be difficult because projections of overall economic and demographic changes point to a potential gap between emerging job requirements and workforce skill levels. Such a gap may not be apparent in the context of the current recession and personnel downsizing. However, looking into the types of jobs available and the skills of many groups of workers during the 1990s and beyond, a major "skilled labor gap" in the service sector is not an unlikely scenario.

First, many of the new jobs being created are in higher-paying, rather than entry-level, occupations. Second, the consensus of experienced observers is that skill requirements of all jobs will rise over time, whereas academic achievement of workers appears to be falling.[7] In addition, dislocated workers are likely to find that their skills and experience are no longer marketable within the context of the new information-service economy.

One of the key strategies to both boost the lagging worker productivity and prevent the "skills gap" in the service sector is to improve workers' education and skills to meet the requirements of new economic activities. Critics assert that too little attention is given to worker skill development and to the diffusion of new information technologies. As a result, America under-trains its labor force, relative to other industrialized nations. For example, Germany has a rigorous vocational training program that is developed and managed by a federal agency, but is implemented mainly in local companies. Over 80% of Germany's workers receive training through this system.[8] The quality of this labor force and its products are held in high esteem, especially by the U.S.

Many service companies have begun to place greater emphasis on upward mobility programs to prepare workers for positions that are technologically more demanding and financially more rewarding. Such efforts appear to maximize the corporate returns on human resource investments. The more extensive upward mobility programs that aim to transcend traditional skills training by taking a long-term, holistic career perspective seem to offer a more comprehensive alternative for the company as well as the disadvantaged workforce. However, little systematic research has been undertaken regarding the extent or effects of upward mobility or career ladder programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers in the service sector.

D. PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED AND DISLOCATED WORKERS

The central focus of this report is on career upgrade opportunities that companies provide to workers who are employed in low-skill, low-wage jobs. There is no legislative mandate for private sector firms to provide such opportunities. However, there are Federal programs to educate and train disadvantaged, unemployed individuals. Some innovative cases of upward mobility programs implemented by service firms are designed to operate in conjunction with government-funded employment programs. Such a linkage would benefit the company by reducing the front-end costs of recruitment, screening, and basic job-skills training.

While Federal employment programs have been in existence since the time of the Great Depression, it was not until the early 1960s that Federal job training and relocation programs for disadvantaged workers began. In 1961, the Area Redevelopment Act (ARA) appropriated $10 million to improve employment opportunities for the disadvantaged population. This was followed in 1962 by the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA). While MDTA was originally intended to serve workers displaced by automation, it was quickly redirected in 1965 toward the needs of the impoverished.[9] With the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) in 1973 came a push for decentralization, marked by expansion of the oversight authority of local governments.

In 1982, CETA was replaced by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) which calls for joint private and public sector efforts to improve job opportunities of economically disadvantaged workers and dislocated workers. Under JTPA, the oversight role of the Federal government is relatively limited, and the roles of state governments and business representatives are expanded.

Two additional Federal programs are currently available for disadvantaged and unemployed persons. Individuals who receive public assistance from the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program are also eligible to participate in its employment training program, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Program (JOBS). The Adult Education Program, authorized under the National Literacy Act of 1991, provides basic education for educationally disadvantaged adults. Key elements of the three current programs are summarized in Table 2.

In addition, there is a nationwide network of nearly 2,000 Federal and state employment service offices. Federally funded programs provide services to disadvantaged persons in the following areas: basic skills and classroom training, on-the-job training, job search assistance, and supportive services. However, these programs are designed to provide pre-employment assistance, not to support career upgrading of disadvantaged and dislocated workers. Such efforts fall largely within the domains of corporate management and labor unions.

Table 2. Comparison of JTPA, JOBS, and Federal Adult Education Programs

	JTPA	JOBS	ADULT EDUCATION
Legislative Authority	Job Training Partnership Act (1982)	Family Support Act (1988)	National Literacy Act (1991)
Administrative	Department of Labor (DOL)/ Employment and Training Administration (ETA)	Health and Human Services (HHS)/ Administration for Children and Families (ACF)	Education Department/ Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)
Service Delivery System	Local service delivery areas determined by governor; oversight by Private Industry Councils (PICs)	State or local administration through county agency administering Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)	State and local education agencies and community groups
Eligible Target Population	Economically disadvantaged individuals; persons with barriers to employment, and dislocated workers	AFDC recipients; may be mandatory for some groups	Educationally disadvantaged (persons 16 or older, not enrolled in secondary school with skills below the fifth grade level)
Services Provided	• Job Search • On-the-Job Training (OJT) • Classroom Job Training • Work Experience	• Job Skills Training • Education Activities • Job Placement • Job Readiness Training • Support Services	• Basic Education • Adult Secondary Education • English-as-a-Second Language (ESL)

Source: Condelli, L. & Kutner, M., Pelavin Associates, Inc. (1991). JOBS and JTPA: Making the Workplace-Basic Skills Connection. Paper presented at the 23rd Annual Conference of the National Alliance of Business, Washington, DC.

E. TECHNICAL APPROACH: AN OVERVIEW

There are relatively few published descriptions of upward mobility programs for disadvantaged service sector employees. This section describes how information was collected for this report. Detailed descriptions of the data collection, processing, and analysis procedures are presented in Volume II.

The scope of the data collection was defined as follows:

- The target population to include low-skilled, low-wage, and/or dislocated workers;
- The service sector to include private business firms in which a large portion of workers are involved in non-manufacturing jobs, while excluding public educational institutions and government organizations; and
- Upward mobility programs to include any educational and training opportunities and personnel management policies and practices provided by employers to promote employee career upgrade.

The scope of the "service sector" was restricted to service industries for two reasons: (1) to focus the inquiry onto the main area of interest indicated in the project task statement, and (2) in recognition of the fact that many public school systems and governments tend to have relatively well-developed career development systems and procedures. Industries listed on Table 1 -- transportation, public utilities, wholesale, retail, finance, hotels/restaurants, business, and health -- were the target industries for this report.

In order to address the project objectives, a three-pronged approach to data collection was undertaken: (1) a review of published materials concerning upward mobility; (2) interviews with subject matter experts (SMEs) representing the perspectives of service industry firms, trade associations, human resource management specialists, labor organizations, and government agencies; and (3) case studies of specific firms. The SME interviews provided information that was not contained in the literature. This included specific information concerning the extent to which general upward mobility programs are intended to serve the special needs of disadvantaged and dislocated workers. The case studies illustrated the types of programs offered by firms varying in service type and organizational structure.

F. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report discusses the current status, availability, and nature of upward mobility programs and practices targeted at low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, or dislocated workers in the service sector. It is intended to inform policymakers of innovative and effective approaches that some service companies have developed to enhance their worker productivity.

Part II of Volume I presents: (A) definitions of the key concepts addressed in this project; (B) characteristics of upward mobility programs; (C) factors related to the availability of upward mobility programs; and (D) current status of upward mobility programs in the service sector. Part III summarizes: (A) factors related to program success; (B) impediments to program

implementation and success; and (C) assessment of program effectiveness. A summary of major findings and issues for further consideration are found in Part IV. Finally, an extensive list of the literature reviewed is presented in Part V, "Bibliography."

Volume II contains additional technical and supporting materials that supplement Volume I. Appendices A through F contain: (A) a detailed description of the project methodology; (B) discussions of theoretical frameworks relevant to the key concepts addressed in this project and issues concerning evaluation of upward mobility programs; (C) examples of upward mobility programs found in various service sector firms; (D) case study summaries; (E) an SME interview guide; and (F) a case study protocol used in this study.

NOTES

1. While it is acknowledged that there is considerable overlap between these categories, each possesses specific qualities that render it conceptually distinct.

2. National Commission for Employment Policy, Assisting Dislocated Workers: Alternatives to Layoffs, and the Role of the Employment Service under the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act (EDWWA) (Washington, DC: National Commission for Employment Policy, 1991).

3. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991); V. Personick, "Industry Output and Employment 2000," Monthly Labor Review, November 1989.

4. R. Wegmann, R. Chapman, and M. Johnson, Work in the New Economy: Careers and Job Seeking into the 21st Century (Indianapolis, IN: American Association for Counseling and Development, 1989).

5. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990).

6. W. B. Johnston and A. H. Packer, Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century (Indianapolis, IN: Hudson Institute, 1987).

7. P. Osterman, "Elements of a National Training Policy," in L. A. Ferman, M. Hoyman, J. Cutcher-Gershenfeld, & E. J. Savoie, New Developments in Worker Training: A Legacy for the 1900s (Madison, WI: Industrial Relations Research Association, 1990).

8. Osterman, 1990.

9. S. A. Levitan and F. Gallo, "Uncle Sam's Helping Hand: Educating, Training, and Employing the Disadvantaged," in L. A. Ferman, M. Hoyman, J. Cutcher-Gershenfeld, and E. J. Savoie (Eds.), New Developments in Worker Training: A Legacy for the 1990s (Madison, WI: Industrial Relations Research Association, 1990).

PART II: UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS

This section begins with discussions of each key concept central to this report, namely the target worker groups (low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, dislocated), internal labor market (ILM), and career upward mobility. These are followed by discussions of characteristics of existing upward mobility programs, factors related to the availability of such programs, and a general assessment of the current status of upward mobility programs in the service sector as a whole.

A. DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

Worker Groups

As noted earlier, three categories of workers are the focus of this study: low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, and dislocated/displaced. Data from the literature review and SME interviews were used to refine these broad definitions.

Low-Skilled Workers

Firms are more concerned with retaining workers with company-specific skills as opposed to other workers with little or no company-specific skills. These workers represent a substantial training cost investment on the part of the firm, which will yield returns to the firm only as long as the specifically-trained workers remain in its employ. Similarly, the loss of a specifically-trained worker, either because of layoffs or resignations, is more costly to a firm than the loss of a low-skilled worker. As a result, when layoffs occur, they traditionally are not distributed uniformly throughout the workforce but are concentrated among low-skilled workers. In addition, firms tend to pay specifically-trained workers more than the unskilled in order to encourage their retention.

Low-skilled workers are found at the bottom rungs of the occupational ladder and have limited access to job rewards. The number of low- or semi-skilled jobs at these bottom rungs declined from 20% of all jobs in 1950 to 13% in 1982, and there is some indication that it is still shrinking. High-paying jobs which were previously open to persons with relatively little formal education are currently experiencing either slow growth or actual declines.[1] Typically those jobs were in government, regulated industries, or large-scale manufacturing corporations. This decline is generally attributed to three factors: (1) the shift in the economy from manufacturing to service industries, (2) the movement of production by multi-national corporations to overseas sites, and (3) technological change.[2]

Economically Disadvantaged Workers

Collectively, economically disadvantaged workers are comprised of the poor and the undereducated. Any attempt to describe "typical" or "average" economically disadvantaged workers is, inevitably, an oversimplification of a very diverse group. Minorities, single mothers, and the young are especially likely to be included in this group.[3] Nevertheless, a common characteristic shared by all economically disadvantaged workers is "marginality." Labor

marginality refers to conditions that lead to the underutilization of workers in the labor market. These conditions include:

- Disabilities that reduce labor market competitiveness;
- Worker characteristics such as race and gender, traditionally associated with lower occupational status;
- Inferior achievements relative to other workers, especially in educational attainment; and
- Occupation or industry characterized by unstable and irregular employment.[4]

The Job Training Partnership Act defines an economically disadvantaged worker as: (1) an individual who receives, or is a member of a family that receives, cash welfare payments; (2) a person whose total family income for the 6-month period prior to application to JTPA programs does not exceed the poverty level established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), or 70% of the BLS lower living standard income level; and/or (3) a person who receives food stamps.[5] Of course there are individuals with incomes barely over these standards who also experience economic hardship. These individuals are also included in our definition of economically disadvantaged worker.

Dislocated or Displaced Workers

The dislocated or displaced worker is one who must find new employment because his or her firm has either permanently closed, or has reduced its workforce. In addition, these individuals do not expect to be recalled to their jobs.[6] While these workers often share the problems faced by economically disadvantaged workers, they are not necessarily low-skilled nor untrained. In fact, many dislocated workers have extensive work experience and many job skills. The problem of this group is a lack of jobs that require the skills these workers have.

Several characteristics of displaced workers have been reported:

- The typical dislocated worker is male, 40 or more years of age, a union member, and the head of a household.[7]
- A large proportion of dislocated workers face significant and permanent loss of income.[8] For example, workers who experienced unemployment during 1981 had median family incomes of $26,600 annually. Upon securing re-employment, median family annual income dropped to $18,500.[9]
- After obtaining new jobs, workers who have been displaced typically work fewer hours than in their former jobs.[10] Also, workers often must adjust to having less autonomy and responsibility, undesirable hours and more physical labor in their new jobs.[11]
- Displaced workers are more likely to experience longer periods of unemployment than are those who quit voluntarily or who are newly entering the workforce.[12]

Also included in the "displaced worker" category are "outplaced workers," or those workers aged 55 and older who have been forced to retire. Demographic data from BLS indicate that the plight of the older displaced worker is particularly severe, given that the probability of re-employment declines steadily with advancing age. For example, BLS data collected between 1979 and 1984 indicated that the probability of re-employment was 70% for dislocated workers aged 20 to 24 years, but only 41% for those aged 55 to 64 years.[13] A follow-up study indicated that those with continuing difficulties were black workers, blue-collar workers, and those previously employed in manufacturing.

An increasing number of white, male, blue-collar workers and professionals are joining the numbers of displaced workers because of layoffs. Many are unable to find jobs commensurate with their skill level and background. Rather than accept a job that is "beneath them," they cease to search for further employment and join the ranks of "discouraged" workers. This is a particularly critical problem for older blue-collar workers who have been laid off. Unlike their professional counterparts, laid-off blue-collar workers typically have few financial resources to supplement their lost income.[14] This may partially explain the apparent employability of younger workers reported by the BLS studies cited above; younger workers have fewer job skills and work experience, but may be more willing to take lower-level jobs than their older counterparts.

Organizational Mobility and Internal Labor Markets

A worker's organizational mobility can be characterized according to **rate** (number of moves in a given time period), **direction** (up, down or across) and **pattern**.[15] Pattern is similar to the notion of a career path, which may vary in length and may involve various combinations of upward, downward, and lateral moves.[16] The mobility of employees within any organization is predicated on the nature and extent of available opportunities.[17] Opportunities are largely determined by the characteristics of the economic environment and the organization's workforce, structure, and technology.[18]

Generally, positions within an organization are ordered hierarchically with a set number at particular levels.[19] The degree to which an employee may move upward is limited by the number of vacant positions available at the next level. As internal candidates are promoted to fill vacancies, their positions become openings for those beneath them, creating a "chain reaction of promotions."[20] The more vacancies there are within an organization, the greater the rate of mobility.[21] Not only the length, but also the structure of an organization's "vacancy chain" will determine how positions are filled and by whom.[22] Within an organization, patterns of vertical and horizontal movement evolve into various types of career lines or "paths" that terminate at the managerial levels.[23]

In this report, an internal labor market, or ILM, refers to a formal organizational infrastructure whose purpose is to develop the company's human resources in order to fill all job vacancies from within the organization. ILMs guide the orderly progression of workers from lower to higher levels of the organization's career ladders. This serves important functions for both employers and workers.[24]

From the employer's perspective, ILMs reduce the costs associated with training and turnover by developing long-term employment relationships that bond workers to the organization.[25] By ensuring a supply of competent workers to fill organizational positions and by reinforcing work

discipline through a hierarchical arrangement of status and advancement, ILMs maximize an organization's ability to successfully meet its goals.

For workers, the primary benefits of ILMs are a guarantee of stable employment, the acquisition of additional skills through on-the-job experience, and an opportunity for advancement.[26] With regard to the latter, ILMs serve to limit competition for position openings to persons already within the organization.

Moreover, the presence of a formal structure to guide individual employee development is often a major determinant of an individual's success in an organization. The relationship between this formal structure and the individual's success has both psychological and economic components. The control of intra-organizational mobility has importance not only for effective management of human resources but also for its indirect influence on the attitudes and behaviors of employees.[27]

The "side bets" theory of organizational commitment demonstrates the compatibility between these two components.[28] When organizations make human capital investments in the form of training and career development, employees also make investments in the organization such as deciding to extend their tenure. These investments, or "side bets," ultimately serve to lock workers into an organization by enhancing their commitment to the organization and to the work role. The presence and extent of opportunity structures within the organization are major factors that strengthen workers' investments in an organization and their commitment to remain.

Additionally, organizations develop administrative rules, regulations, and procedures to govern the allocation of human resources within the firm.[29] Important factors that affect the extent of mobility include:

- A policy of promotion from within;[30]
- The extent to which incumbents' previous levels of experience, education, or job performance are featured in the selection criteria (mobility rates tend to be higher when the level of criteria is low)[31]; and
- Universal application of established rules.[32]

Degree of mobility is indicated by three basic structural features: (1) presence of a job or career ladder with (2) entry only at the bottom rungs and (3) movement up the ladder based on a progressive development of knowledge and/or skills.[33]

Consequently, an ILM is more than just a governance structure that protects or preserves specific skills. Rather, it is a structured, comprehensive system that facilitates the delivery of the training necessary for workers' continuing development. Central to this system is an upward mobility program that is based on discrete career paths and opportunities for promotion (i.e., vertical upward mobility).

Upward Mobility Programs

Upward mobility programs are a central component of ILMs that are designed to provide workers with opportunities beyond those acquired through ongoing work experience.[34] Frequently, the two

terms are used synonymously to describe those corporate policies and procedures that shape worker development and career paths. For the purposes of this report the following definition of upward mobility program is used:

> An upward mobility program is an educational training program that provides training to entry-level and low-echelon workers in order to enhance the knowledge and skills needed to perform their current tasks as well as those viewed as prerequisites to higher positions within the firm.

The fundamental cornerstone of an upward mobility program is an infrastructure that may include information about promotion opportunities, lateral movement, and general company philosophy regarding the welfare of its workers. Building on this foundation are general versions of specific skills training, where employing organizations take a long-term perspective in making human capital decisions. These decisions, such as who, what, and how to train, affect upward mobility programs.

Formal training should be viewed as one component of an upward mobility program and not as the entire program itself. Upward mobility programs are distinguished from worker training in general through their implicit or explicit linkage to employee career progression within the firm. This developmental emphasis sets upward mobility programs apart from educational programs that focus on skill acquisition alone. Aside from this defining feature, upward mobility programs can assume many forms, ranging from informal work group socialization processes to formal, systematic policies and procedures that govern advancement in the organizational hierarchy. These procedures include such practices as job rotation, formalized training, apprenticeship programs and certification procedures, job posting, and succession planning.

An even more structured approach is the application of human resource matrices that specifically identify and define career progression in the organization. Such a human resource matrix includes:

- Identification and definition of skills and proficiency levels for each position in the organization;
- Individual skills profiles that identify the strengths and weaknesses of each employee and show the individual's career pattern; and
- Mobility draft forms, that indicate skills and performance ratings for each candidate being considered for a given position.[35]

Most upward mobility programs have been developed in large organizations where there is greater division of labor and numerous hierarchical levels. Since many firms in the service sector are small or mid-sized firms, they may find it difficult to justify the start-up expenses of a formally structured upward mobility program for relatively few workers. Consequently, many opt for the less expensive alternative of a more informal program in which management follows general procedures to encourage worker movement in the company on an ad hoc basis.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS

What are Program Contents and Objectives?

The content of any given upward mobility program depends upon such factors as industry type, worker characteristics, job skill requirements, and the intended objective of the program. Objectives may range from increasing workers' general competency levels in the 3Rs (reading, writing, and math skills), increasing productive output of specific job tasks, and preparing workers for alternative occupations when major layoffs are expected. The type of industry and its characteristics, such as the level of advanced technology and the degree of client/customer interaction, also affect the content of training programs.

Although no two programs are likely to be identical, upward mobility programs are often discussed in terms of two basic types: (1) job-specific skills training and (2) basic skills training. It is safe to assume that most entry-level workers receive a certain amount of job skills training to begin performing tasks involved in their new positions. A key question regarding upward mobility is whether or not skills training is linked to increased worker opportunities for promotion and/or job upgrades. For example, the Career Ladder Program at Cape Cod Hospital illustrates a structured approach in which workers advance through a specified career path. A formal system of education and training enables workers to progress through the system.

Such "opportunities" may not be formally structured in a sequence of instructional courses. Rather, they may consist of close working relationships with supervisors or senior co-workers who serve as mentors and informal teachers of skills required for the next higher-level position. The content of job skills training is truly diverse, reflecting the specific job tasks associated with specific positions and firms.

The concept of "basic skills training" implies a high degree of similarity across programs. For example, many "remedial" training programs are designed to improve general literacy and mathematical/computational abilities. However, in assessing the prevalence of work-based basic skills programs, wide variation is found in the content of what companies consider "basic skills" training.[36] An examination of such variations conducted by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) identified seven hierarchically ordered "basic work skills" that employers generally seek to foster in their employees.[37] Ranging from low to high priority (with 7 as the highest) the skills are as follows:

1. Learning to learn;
2. Reading, writing, and math skills;
3. Listening and oral communication;
4. Creative thinking and problem solving;
5. Self-esteem, goal setting, motivation, and personal and career development;
6. Interpersonal, negotiation, and teamwork skills; and
7. Leadership for organizational effectiveness.

Despite the increasing use of technology even in relatively low-skilled occupations, communication and interpersonal skills, as well as literacy and math skills, are becoming more important among employers willing to invest in employee training and development. This is largely due to the growing acknowledgement of the need to raise the quality of employee-

customer interactions as a means of sustaining a competitive edge in customer-oriented industries.[38] It is generally acknowledged that because service industries "produce" services rather than tangible products, the quality of customer service is crucial to corporate survival.[39] Career development and career ladder programs ensure economic survival by honing employees' interpersonal as well as job specific skills. From the management perspective, developing employees' interpersonal and job-specific skills is a cost-effective means of promoting high quality customer service and a decrease in employee turnover.

A 1990 Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) report indicates the difficulty in assessing the prevalence of work-based basic skills training.[40] Numerous surveys of business firms reveal that the estimates of availability of such programs vary widely due to ambiguity in survey questions, different meanings companies attach to "basic skills," and generally low survey response rates. For example, a survey conducted in 1989 showed that about 30% of firms with 100 or more employees provided basic skills training. However, this was based on 3,130 surveys returned out of 20,000 sent, a response rate of only 15.7%.[41] The companies that responded may overly represent those with training programs already in place. Another limiting factor is that the survey omitted firms with fewer than 100 employees, of which there are many in the service sector.

Some work-based training programs, such as the Skills Enhancement Training (SET) Program, developed by the Food and Beverage Workers Union, Local 32, in Washington, DC, focus primarily on the "3Rs." Others, such as the Career Ladder Program at Cape Cod Hospital in Hyannis, Massachusetts, include "basic skills remedial training" along with job-specific skills training. Such combinations are particularly useful, especially where a lack of sufficient basic skills prevents workers from taking advantage of other career upgrade training provided by employers.

Most upward mobility programs contain varying degrees of training in basic skills and/or job-specific skills pertinent to the company. Exceptions to this rule are cases where companies directly or indirectly support the development of alternative job skills to prepare for downsizing and layoffs. The Alliance, which is a joint partnership effort between the American Telephone and Telegraph Co. (AT&T) and two labor unions, presents an example in which relatively low-skilled workers such as telephone operators can receive funding to pursue associate degrees in unrelated areas, such as nursing or accounting.

Finally, some upward mobility program contents are developed from personnel management policies and practices. Some companies establish well-defined career ladders and tenure and job performance eligibility rules for promotions. These types of programs tend to include strong career guidance provided by immediate supervisors and/or career counseling staff. For example, in one nationwide hotel chain, 75% of the management staff started in entry-level jobs and were promoted through the system. In another hotel chain, (Guest Quarters Suite Hotels), the promotional system also combines similar human resource management practices with basic and job skills training.

Where Are Workers Trained? Who Does the Training?

Training programs that promote career mobility take place in a variety of settings involving a diversity of trainers. They may be conducted on-site using company facilities, or off-site, and by

in-house staff or trainers contracted from external sources. Each approach includes certain advantages and limitations to workers and employers.

On-site vs. Off-site Training

Between 60% and 80% of all employer-sponsored formal training in both manufacturing and service industries is provided on-site.[42] On-site training at the workplace typically assumes one or more of the following forms: OJT, mentorship and/or apprenticeship, and the use of on-site facilities to conduct classes or seminars. On-site training varies according to the level of integration of training and the actual production of goods and services. However, one characteristic common to all on-site training is that it is endorsed by management, either implicitly or explicitly. Further, on-site training eliminates the need for workers to travel to training locations and allows the use of training materials related to workers' actual jobs. This facilitates learning job-specific skills.

There is a growing interest among companies to use external resources to develop and administer employee training. This is often accomplished by customizing a generic package to accommodate the specific needs and organizational environment of each company. Another trend is for several firms, especially small and mid-sized firms, to pool their resources to develop a training program that all can share. These programs are often conducted off-site at local high schools, community colleges, technical vocational schools, or union halls. This approach may create additional costs to students, such as for child-care and transportation. Its potential benefits include: the technical expertise of professional trainers; structured, systematic instruction; and formal certificates of competency that are acknowledged both within and outside of the present company, such as General Education Development (GED) and technical skills certificates.

On-the-job Training (OJT)

OJT is a widely used on-site training technique, typically delivered as an integral part of ongoing work activities in all types of workplaces including private industry.[43] A basic model of an OJT program involves the following components: verbal instruction (tell), visual application (show), trainee performance (do), coaching, and repetitive practice.[44] In verbal instruction and visual application, the supervisor sets the standards for performance by explaining the component skills involved in each task and by actually demonstrating how to perform them. In the "do" phase, trainees perform the assigned task. The coaching phase involves giving feedback to trainees on their performance. Finally, trainees may be asked to repeat the entire process, or parts of it, until they master the tasks involved.

Ideally, training managers provide supervisors with requisite training in implementing and delivering OJT, and assist them in the planning and delivery of programs. This is usually accomplished through some form of formal supervisory training program which covers basic teaching methodology as well as course content.[45] In practice, however, the new employee training is often delegated to one or more experienced employees in the work unit who delivers OJT through a relatively informal process.[46] This typically involves three stages:

- The new employee observes the best employee in the unit for a period of time.

- The new employee begins to perform the tasks involved in the job while the experienced employee acts as a trainer or coach to deal with problems or questions.

- The new employee reaches a performance level that is considered adequate and is fully integrated into the unit.

One study estimated the effects of OJT on work unit productivity using a computer simulation of OJT in service job situations. The situations examined included computer repair persons, engineers, sales personnel, and barbers.[47] Three results were germane to the present discussion:

- OJT is not always more cost-effective than its structured alternatives, given the disruption to work unit productivity resulting from training activities.

- When OJT is used, supervisors should substitute supervisory and/or training department intervention to minimize the direct involvement of their experienced employees in training.

- When experienced employee involvement is necessary, a multi-stage plan of OJT is beneficial. Initially, before the new employee begins to perform the actual work, a middle-skill employee is the optimal trainer. As the new employee begins to take on more complex jobs, the highest skilled employee is the most appropriate trainer.

When compared with structured training programs, OJT is generally less efficient in teaching employees necessary skills.[48] Among sales personnel, the effects of OJT are of relatively short duration, such that "... after a year back on the job, being buffeted by daily problems, learning seems to cycle back to zero."[49] On the other hand, government-sponsored OJT programs have yielded some limited, positive, economic returns for participants.[50]

An important point for this report is that in many small businesses with limited financial and personnel resources, initial employee training may consist solely of OJT for specific skills. A potential weakness of this method is that the quality and outcome of training is limited by the trainers' level of competence in the job skills and their ability to teach.

Mentorship and Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship training may occur either on- or off-site. It is more structured than OJT and may involve trainers other than supervisory and senior staff from the trainees' work units. Traditionally, apprenticeship has been associated with technical trades more than with entry-level service jobs. However, the on-site mentorship approach may be applied in service industries, as exemplified by a job-readiness development program operated by Dayton Hudson Department Stores, headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for low-skilled and economically disadvantaged new employees. In this program, each new employee is matched with a seasoned employee, or "partner," for the first six months of their employment.[51] This partner is responsible for helping the new worker by explaining their job duties and providing other general information about the workplace.

With regard to technical skills, apprentice-trained workers possess better skills than those trained by other methods.[52] Moreover, they are more likely to become supervisors and employers than

are those in less formal training systems.[53] Apprenticeship also constitutes an access route to nontraditional (and higher paying) forms of employment for women under equal opportunity enforcement measures.[54]

Computer-Assisted Training

Companies may reduce the cost of training substantially by investing in the development of computer-assisted instruction for basic academic and job skills, and the numerous off-the-shelf software programs. Aside from eliminating the cost of trainers, the main advantage of this approach is that it provides flexibility in scheduling and identifying locations for the training. In fact, United Parcel Service (UPS) is currently developing a series of computer-based training materials and is directing its workers to use them at their work stations whenever there are short "down times" during their workday. This maximizes the productive use of worker time and reduces training and personnel costs.

Classes and/or Seminars

Employers acquire 31% of on-site formal training courses from outside suppliers or "vendors."[55] This approach provides the advantages of on-site training and also the technical expertise of professional trainers. The trainers may be private training consultants, equipment vendors, proprietary schools, or personnel from labor unions or trade associations. The effectiveness of any given approach must be determined with respect to the specific training objectives and context. However, training obtained through equipment vendors and proprietary schools tends to be narrowly focused on the particular technology they manufacture and teach, and thus is limited in its long-term application to many different situations. The basic skills training provided to cafeteria workers at various work sites in the Washington, DC, area through the Skills Enhancement Training (SET) Program is one example of this type of on-site training supported by a grant from the Department of Education.

Community Colleges and Vocational Technical Institutes

Educational institutions are assuming a greater role in the upgrading of workers' skills. They provide "off-the-shelf" courses in such areas as basic skills remedial training, General Education Development (GED) preparation, English-as-a-Second Language (ESL), and a variety of basic technical instructions. More recently, these institutions have begun to develop courses tailored for specific companies or a group of similar companies. Providing these courses benefits the colleges because they are developing new materials that may be adapted and sold to others. Potential drawbacks of this approach are the cost and time commitment to employee and/or employer, and the relative gap between course content and workers' job skill requirements.

A program that exemplifies a number of the training methods described above is the school-to-work transition program for service repair technicians at Sears, Roebuck, and Company. The program was developed in conjunction with Chicago area high schools and a local vocational/technical school. High school juniors and seniors are trained in basic math, science and literature, as well as applied electronics and mechanical repair. Off-site classes and computer assisted training are provided at both high schools and the vocational/technical school. Students then work part-time during school and full-time in the summer at a Sears Service Center and receive OJT. Upon graduation from high school, the students are eligible for full-time, permanent

employment at Sears, starting at one or two positions higher than the usual entry level position. Further, they can also participate in the career ladder program offered by Sears.

Who Initiates and Manages Upward Mobility Programs?

Firm-Sponsored Training and Development (T&D) Programs

Traditionally, worker training has been viewed by both labor and management as within the purview of the employer, given that it was the employer rather than workers who derived chief benefits from the results.[56] Moreover, employers invest resources in those programs that are expected to result in greater returns relative to other investments.[57] From a management perspective, there are seven prevalent applications of employer-sponsored training:

- To enhance the use of capital (equipment);
- To enhance the use of materials;
- To enhance the use of labor;
- To implement Japanese-type management systems;
- For management and executive team building;
- For supervisory-subordinate relationships;
- For leadership; and
- For expatriate assignments (intercultural training).[58]

Within these applications, training to enhance the use of labor pertains directly to upward mobility programs in the service sector. This involves developing specific knowledge, skills, and abilities in employees at various levels of the organization.[59] Developing workers' human capital potential is essential if employers are to successfully transition to an economy that increasingly demands workers with highly developed cognitive and interpersonal skills.

Unlike programs based on union efforts, company-sponsored training programs are conducted mostly in-house with training content determined solely by management objectives. Approval to participate depends largely on supervisor recommendations as well as employee seniority. Similarly, effectiveness is judged according to standards, goals, and objectives set by management; namely improved job performance and increased productivity. Aetna Insurance Company is a firm that has sponsored the development of extensive training facilities to provide basic and job specific skills training. Targeted especially at economically disadvantaged populations, the Aetna Institute offers tuition assistance to any worker expressing interest and who meets the established criteria. Training is necessary, but not sufficient, for the worker to move up the career ladder.

Union-Sponsored Education and Training Programs

For more than 100 years, the field of labor-sponsored education in the U.S. has encompassed a wide range of offerings for working people under a variety of institutional auspices.[60] Until the mid-1960s, the primary objective of union-sponsored education programs was to promote the existence of unions, or union-building. Typical topics covered were union administration, collective bargaining, leadership skills, and political action.[61] Attendees represented a fairly homogeneous group that was limited to union staff, elected officers, and activists from blue-collar unions.

Considerable shifts have occurred over the last 20 years in the focus and content of union-based education. Data from 1988 and 1989 point to five major changes:[62]

- Current programs include a number of constituencies who frequently fall into the category of disadvantaged and dislocated workers, most notably service sector employees, women, minorities, and new immigrants.

- New content areas are now being addressed, such as the special concerns of women, minorities, and new immigrants.

- New and more sophisticated topics and approaches are being included (e.g., subjects from the social and behavioral sciences, instructional techniques such as computer-based-training (CBT) and study circles, and one-to-one interaction).

- New delivery systems such as college degree programs, teleconferencing, and television broadcasts are being utilized as well as a wider range of training organizations. These include community colleges, commercial consulting firms, coalitions for occupational safety and health (COSH), the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, and resident education centers established by national unions.

- Organizations in addition to unions are being utilized as sources of funding. These include private foundations, national and state government agencies, and joint union-management coalitions.

Joint Union-Management Training Programs

Worker training programs increasingly are the joint efforts of union and management. This may be attributed to their mutual realization that joint cooperation is necessary to develop and administer the kinds of large-scale programs capable of coping with the introduction of new technologies to the U.S. workplace. Programs range from a narrow focus on specific skills for particular jobs to a broad focus on worker education and development.[63]

The following five features distinguish joint training programs from other forms of worker training:[64]

- Joint programs serve a broader target population that includes displaced as well as employed workers.

- In order to maximize workers' employment security, training often extends beyond the internal labor market of the company to include the external labor market.

- Joint programs have a distinct participant-driven ideology that is embodied in a process of cooperative decision-making.

- Joint programs are governed by equal numbers of union and management representatives.

- Joint programs have a high degree of local control, based on the need to administer training at the site level.

Collectively, these characteristics serve "to democratize access to training (within the union membership) and to let the participants themselves define programmatic content."[65] However, the extent to which a joint program exemplifies these features depends largely on organizational size. Programs set in large firms typically address more broad-based educational topics. Frequently, these topics go beyond skill development for a specific job to personal development skills and long-term career planning. Moreover, larger firms have contracts that are more rigorously defined regarding the contribution of each party to the training effort. For example, in large firms it is emphasized that joint training activities must not replace existing company or union training obligations. Also, a national or regional center frequently provides major program support such as technical assistance, a coordinated computer database, and/or model training materials. In contrast, joint programs in small firms tend to maintain control at the grass roots level.[66]

Regardless of size, joint training programs share three characteristics. First, both union and management allocate equivalent resources to address the issue of worker dislocation.[67] Second, in both large and small firms, top-level responsibilities for program administration usually reside with the employer's labor relations officials and with the union's top officers and bargaining committee members. Finally, both tend to rely heavily on community service networks, most notably community colleges, for the provision of courses.[68]

An estimated 40% of the companies that have cooperative union-management relationships have developed joint training programs.[69] Concentration of these companies vary considerably by geographic location and industry type; a high proportion is located in the Midwest and in the transportation industry. Most large-scale, jointly-sponsored programs are in the manufacturing sector, such as the auto industry. A prime example in the service sector is The Alliance, a joint effort between AT&T, the Communication Workers of America, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Moreover, most of the jointly-sponsored programs serve multiple constituencies (e.g., both employed and displaced workers) as well as multiple purposes. With regard to the latter, 45 unique labor-management programs report 152 different purposes.[70] These range from traditional purposes such as safety and health, upgrading, staffing and outplacement, to nontraditional purposes such as retraining and relocating displaced workers, communication skills, personal development, and basic skills training.

No single reason dominates the impetus for training. Rather, joint programs seem to evolve as a response to one or more of the following trends: labor-management partnership, economic competition, leadership, worker displacement, community college availability, and new technology. Moreover, the effectiveness of these programs is determined on an individual basis, based on the fulfillment of targets set in each individual's career development plan.[71]

One distinct purpose of joint labor-management training efforts is helping dislocated workers prepare for potential career change. Such efforts may range from the dissemination of information to dislocated workers, to broad-based programs that involve the coordinated input of workers, the union, the employer, the community, and the state government.[72] Again, The Alliance is an example of such a current effort.

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C. FACTORS RELATED TO THE AVAILABILITY OF UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS

Factors External to Organizations

Factors outside of organizations significantly affect individual workers' job mobility within a company.[73] On a national level, these factors include primarily the legal and economic characteristics of the immediate environment surrounding the organization. The effects of the legislative environment are seen in corporate efforts to specify promotion criteria in compliance with equal employment opportunity requirements.[74] Organizations that depend heavily on government contracts typically offer greater job opportunities for disadvantaged and dislocated workers compared to more autonomous companies.[75]

Domestic economic and labor market conditions play a key role in determining the relative value to management of its existing corporate workforce. In an expanding economy with a potential labor shortage, companies tend to place greater value on their workforce and on worker training and development.[76] On the other hand, in a recessionary environment with threats of corporate downsizing, resources for employee career development may be targeted for cutbacks.

In the service sector, particularly in the hospitality and accommodations industries, the corporate "product" is often synonymous with employee-customer interaction. Increasingly, the ability to compete successfully depends on having a stable pool of employees trained, not only technically, but also in communication and interpersonal skills. Thus, from the employers' perspective, an upward mobility program is a cost-effective vehicle to maintain and increase their competitive edge.

On a multinational level, foreign trade and technological competition in the world market are key factors that can affect corporate interest in employee development. Both technology and overseas expansion by U.S. corporations have increased over the last two decades. For the coming decades within the service sector, two contrasting scenarios are possible:[77]

- American firms may move in the direction of offering more services to foreign countries, thus increasing the number of service sector workers needed to fill positions in the U.S. and overseas.

- Technological advances may make it more cost-effective for service sector firms to move their bases of operations overseas, thus decreasing the number of positions available to U.S. workers.

The presence of external labor market pressures, such as deregulation and foreign competition that have developed over the last 20 years, are major determinants of a company's receptivity to career training and career ladder programs.[78] Firms surviving these pressures are forced to compete in terms of the quality of their product. AT&T is an example of companies responding to the effects of deregulation. When faced with emerging competition from companies such as MCI and Sprint, AT&T strengthened labor-management joint efforts to increase workers' job skills, productivity, and commitment to work. These, in turn, would enhance AT&T's competitive advantage.

Organizational and Industrial Characteristics

The following characteristics of industries, companies, and workers influence career mobility patterns of the workforce:

- Corporate size,
- Corporate structure and occupational type,
- Growth rate,
- Type of industry,
- Technology, and
- Workforce age and grade ratios.

Corporate Size

The literature is clear with respect to the implications of organizational size for mobility opportunities. Large organizations offer considerably greater opportunities for internal upward mobility than do smaller ones.[79] This is largely due to the correlation of size to other positive indicators of ILMs; most notably formal training programs and personnel departments.[80] Size also interacts with industry type and organizational complexity with respect to upward mobility. Large organizations in prosperous industries contain more hierarchical levels and hence greater promotional opportunities. Large firms tend to offer upward mobility programs because they have more capital and human resources to devote to training programs.[81]

Small businesses are characterized by limited resources and limited investment in formal training. In small firms, there are fewer vacancies and fewer hierarchical levels to which an aspiring employee may ascend. At the same time, workers in small businesses tend to be less educated and have less work experience than those in large firms. For these workers, there are more opportunities for mobility outside of their companies, resulting in higher turnover rates within the organization.[82]

The relative proportion of small businesses in the U.S. economy has expanded markedly in the last decade. Small businesses have generated a disproportionate share of newly created jobs.[83] Between 1981 and 1985, 88% of net job creation occurred in firms with fewer than 20 employees.[84] Firms with fewer than 500 employees accounted for half of all the jobs in the U.S. economy, and for almost 40% of all new jobs.[85]

The shift toward a small business economy may bring about a concomitant decrease in company-sponsored worker training. Most of the worker training that exists is provided by large firms. A survey conducted by the Small Business Administration (SBA) estimated that almost half of workers employed in large companies (with 500 or more workers) received some kind of training from their current or former employers. In fact, employers with 500 or more employees provided almost three times as much training in the first three months of employment as did firms with fewer than 500 employees.[86]

Most persons employed by small companies obtain their training off the job. Moreover, of those who seek training external to the firm, employees of small firms must pay for substantially more of their training themselves compared to workers of large firms. In fact, firms with fewer than 100 workers covered an average of only 23% of annual training costs.[87]

Work-based training programs are mainly found in large companies. Attempts to implement commonly used, generic training tools, such as Adult Basic Education in small businesses, have met with limited success. Such efforts are often compromised by inadequate funding and by difficulty in identifying workers needing basic education. In the case of Adult Basic Education, a component of the Adult Education Program administered by the Department of Education, there may be a "cultural problem" as many companies consider the programs "too academic."[88]

Guest Quarters Suite Hotels is a large business that has established a comprehensive and successful upward mobility program. Their experience indicates that while this program can be applied in smaller companies, it would be more difficult than transferring the program to larger companies. The issue is a financial one. According to a corporate human resources executive, "Most of the small companies cannot afford the kind of training that consultants give -- you might have someone come in and demonstrate a training program and charge $15,000 to implement it"; instead, small companies have to be "spoon fed" upward mobility programs.[89] However, the value of those efforts becomes clear given that small hotel chains, particularly those consisting of 20 hotels or less, represent three-quarters of this industry.

The growing number of workers employed by small businesses has also put an increased strain on unions which began to direct much of their efforts to organizing small shops.[90] Similar levels of union effort and resources are expended to organize workers regardless of the size of the establishment. However, promoting training in small businesses is more problematic because the companies have fewer resources for training, and are thus more resistant to union efforts to organize and train employees. Thus, "selling" the vision of joint management-worker collaboration varies considerably among companies; large companies with adequate training resources tend to be the most receptive.

Corporate Structure and Type of Occupations

Organizational structure is closely related to organizational size. Organizations with many vertical levels, multiple divisions, and geographic locations (branches) are all likely to provide more opportunities for movement, primarily by extending career paths and increasing opportunities for horizontal movement.[91] Thus, holding other factors constant, multiple or "branch" establishments are more likely to provide upward mobility opportunities than are single establishment organizations.[92] A company with multiple establishments can rotate workers among sites as a means of developing requisite experiences to qualify for promotion opportunities. The ability to develop employees through career-enhancing job transfers allows multiple-branch organizations to maximize the advantages of internal labor market practices.[93]

The two hotels included in the case studies support the policy of enhancing employee career advancement through a systematic use of job transfers. Both hotels provide employees with regular reviews of their job performance. These "performance appraisals" include a discussion of the employee's promotion potential and eligibility based on tenure, as well as information concerning position vacancies to which they can apply for a job upgrade. The latter often involves an electronic "matching" of employee profiles and career credentials with prerequisites and specifications for a given job. It is important to remember that implementing such a policy would be more difficult for smaller, single-unit companies.

While the service sector as a whole has enjoyed rapid expansion, growth has not been distributed uniformly across occupational levels. Between 1972 and 1987, occupations with high proportions of college-educated workers grew, while those with few college educated workers declined.[94] Most growth has been concentrated in managerial and professional positions. Continuation of this trend would mean that upward mobility opportunities may also decline in occupations that require little specialized training and education.

Growth Rate

Promotion occurs considerably faster in a growing organization than in a stable one.[95] Growing organizations provide better promotional opportunities by increasing the ratio of supply to demand of organizational positions. Further, career sequences in organizational labor markets are affected by organizational growth rates because of this increase in the number of positions.[96] However, promotion opportunities at the top of the organization are affected less than those at the middle ranks. This is because organizations generally conform to a pyramid-like structure, with the fewest positions at the top. The impact of growth on career mobility follows a pattern of diminishing returns -- at some point, increases in growth fail to generate a proportionate number of increases in promotions.

The impact of growth rate on career mobility depends on other organizational characteristics such as company size and complexity. For example, organizational growth has little effect on promotional opportunities in small businesses that lack adequate training resources, a formal training program, and organizational complexity.[97] A large portion of the workforce expansion that occurred in service industries involved small businesses. Thus, the factors that limit promotion opportunities in small businesses may hinder the potential effect of growth to increase career mobility for service employees.

Type of Industry

The distribution of upward mobility opportunities varies considerably by service industry type, largely reflecting the differential growth of various service sector industries. Industries such as business services are growing rapidly while others, such as banking, have lagged behind. The fastest growing business services include temporary agencies and computer and data processing services. Firms offering medical services, mailing and reproduction services, advertising, and management consulting have also exhibited tremendous growth over the last 20 years.[98] Many of these offer a high number of "easy-entry" occupations, which are characterized by low wages and high employee turnover.

There are also considerable differences in worker training programs across industries within the service sector. Rapidly expanding industries such as accommodations are most likely to be on "the cutting edge" of the push for worker training and development. This is due, in part, to the fact that they are labor- rather than capital-intensive. For example, in the railroad industry individual workers use very expensive equipment which leave fewer dollars available for worker training and/or upgrading. Conversely, labor-intensive industries such as hotels require many workers to produce each unit of output. In a sense, workers in these industries become an integral part of the overall product. Thus, when the product is a relatively intangible one, such as hospitality, there is a heightened need on the part of management to ensure a stable and well-

trained labor pool. By offering a future to entry- and mid-level workers, upward mobility programs maximize the likelihood that the "product" will be competitive and of high quality.[99]

The communications industry, as exemplified by AT&T, has a long history of education and training, which includes a structured program for moving persons from entry-level positions toward the top of the corporate pyramid. As one training specialist stated, while "you can't move **everyone** from the bottom to the top, you can come in as a telephone operator and there are still opportunities to move up in the company."[100] Formal training in this industry spans the gamut of program types from paying "for a master's degree at Harvard, to training to be a telephone operator and everything in between."[101]

Within the transportation industry, United Parcel Service (UPS) and Federal Express are prime examples of companies involved in worker training. For UPS, these programs are largely a response to the increased use of computers in the workplace and the subsequent need for technological training for their aging labor pool. Federal Express is a newer organization, and every branch office has a training department. They use a network of computers as the primary means for training delivery. On an individual basis, employees learn through interactive video practice sessions.

Fewer opportunities exist for skill upgrading or advancement in the trucking industry. This is largely due to the issue of licensing. Persons who own a truck can become truck drivers independent of any organization.[102]

Often the prevalence of part-time positions relates to fewer employee benefits and a lack of upward mobility in a company. Overall, there is far more part-time employment in the service sector than in the goods-producing sector: 21% versus 4.5%.[103] The extent of part-time employment also varies by service industry. For example, retail sales employs a disproportional share of part-time workers. These workers are largely women, young persons, persons with below average earnings, the self-employed, and unpaid family workers.[104]

Technology

An organization's technology sets certain boundaries for workers' mobility by requiring specific skills to qualify for available positions. Organizational technology can be grouped into three types: long-linked, mediating, and intensive. Long-linked technology refers to a set of linked, interdependent tasks, such as an assembly line, where workers are semi-skilled and highly interchangeable across a variety of simple, routinized tasks. The tasks require little preparatory training, and promotions are typically based on seniority rather than performance.

A mediating technology involves connecting different types of clients who are interdependent. This occurs in banking and insurance. Job positions are grouped into specialized units which mirror customer groups, and career movement across the specialized units often requires retraining for new sets of skills and knowledge.

An intensive technology involves complex, non-routinized tasks, like those occurring in research laboratories or hospitals. Considerable autonomy is given to workers, who typically must apply high-level cognitive and analytic skills to solve complex problems. Since their skills are so

specialized, there is little horizontal movement across technologies, and advancement within the organization follows a professional path of vertical movement.

An organization's type of technology has a significant impact on employee upward mobility. In a study of 298 pharmaceutical company employees, 59% of promotions were in the intensive technology group, only 17% were in the mediating technology, and 24% in the long-linked technology groups.[105] Moreover, the criteria for promotion were different in each group. Seniority was the main promotion criteria in long-linked technology, compared to sponsorship in the mediating and intensive technologies. In complex organizations, the fit between worker skills and organizational technology should be examined at the level of organizational units (sections, divisions, departments) rather than at the level of the organization as a whole.[106]

Technological change may either increase or decrease the job opportunities in an organization and also affect the job tasks and number of specialized positions. When technological change creates a different set of tasks, the organization must either acquire persons with the necessary new skills from the external labor market, or develop them from within.[107] Frequently, technological advances create bureaucratic or professional specializations which lengthen the chains of opportunity within the organization.[108] Because technologies tend to become more idiosyncratic over time, it becomes more important for the organization to retain workers who have been trained to operate them.[109] Consequently, firms experiencing technological changes, and requiring workers with specific skills, are more likely to follow internal labor market practices of promotions from within.[110]

Age and Grade Ratio

Age structure refers to the ages of employees at various levels of an organization. Grade ratio refers to the proportion of workers at each level or "grade" within the hierarchy. Age ratio refers to the proportion of workers representing various age groups, at each level or grade of the organizational hierarchy. "Top heavy" organizations have a large proportion of the workforce clustered in top-level positions, while in "bottom heavy" organizations, many workers are concentrated at the bottom ranks. Age and grade ratios are closely related. Generally, more older workers occupy slots at the top organizational levels while more younger workers are found in positions at the lower levels.[111]

Staff exits and new jobs within a grade trigger chain reactions of vacancies and promotions one grade lower. Overall, promotion opportunities are greater in relatively older, top-heavy organizations since the retirement of older workers in higher positions creates vacancies. This yields greater promotion opportunities for the smaller numbers of young persons in the lower and entry-level positions. Conversely, younger, bottom-heavy organizations are limited with respect to advancement opportunities because there are more persons competing for fewer vacancies.[112]

Based on expected shifts in labor market demographics for the coming decades, the U.S. population will become older. Reasonable economic growth and an increase in number of jobs would predict a healthy career mobility outlook for young, entry-level workers. However, this basic scenario may be attenuated and made more complex by factors such as the following:

- Residual effects of a recessionary environment with continuing downsizing trends,

- Technological changes making older workers' skills obsolete and leading to their dislocation, and

- Technological changes requiring new and greater skills among younger workers.

Individual Employee Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of employees also influence their upward mobility within the organization. For the individual worker, a prime determinant of mobility is the "match" between his or her characteristics (e.g., job skills, work style, seniority) and the organization's criteria for mobility.[113] Age, gender, ethnicity, education, and organizational tenure of employees each affect a worker's organizational mobility.

Age

Individual mobility has been shown to decrease with advancing age.[114] An individual's best chances for promotion occur earlier, the higher he or she is in the organization.[115] Individuals with career mobility potentials, especially managers, tend to have greater mobility the younger they are when they enter into the organization.[116] However, due to the overall aging of the workforce, we may expect significantly higher proportions, between 150 and 400 times the current number, of persons aged 60 or above in higher managerial positions over the next 20 years. This implies a concomitant decrease in future promotion rates for young and entry-level workers.[117]

Gender

It has been consistently shown that men experience greater mobility than do women.[118] By the mid-1980s, women outnumbered men in food services, health care services (aids and orderlies), cleaning and private household work, and personal services (hairdressers and cosmetologists). These "pink-collar" occupations are characterized by few or no mobility opportunities, unstable employment, and low pay.[119] As of October 1991, 87% of U.S. working women were employed in service occupations.[120]

A survey of over two thousand private-sector employees found that men were more likely than women to possess all five of the worker-power variables: union membership, occupational licensing, occupationally-based skill requirements, class position, and tenure with a specific employer.[121] Moreover, more males than females were employed in high-profit firms. Both worker power and resource-intensive firms are associated with greater upward mobility and higher employee earnings.

Race

Opportunities in the workplace favoring whites continue to persist. The unemployment and poverty rates among blacks are more than double that of the population as a whole.[122] Among Hispanics, the unemployment and poverty rates also far exceed the rates for the general population, although not as severely as for blacks. Blacks, more so than whites, are likely to occupy so-called dead-end jobs characterized by low pay and irregular employment.[123]

Current labor market projections indicate that by the year 2000 minorities will constitute 29% of all new labor market entrants.[124] The number of minorities is expected to increase in the lower-rung service sector jobs. Not coincidentally, they represent a disproportionate number of persons falling into the category of economically disadvantaged workers.[125]

Seniority

Seniority is another important indicator of employee mobility. Employees who have been in an organization longer are more likely to experience organizational promotions. In unionized settings, this is typically made explicit in all collective bargaining and contractual agreements between labor and management. Additionally, the length of an employee's tenure within an organization is a direct index of the extent of his or her firm-specific skills; the longer a worker has been employed by a firm, the more company-specific knowledge he or she is likely to have. Therefore, the employer is more likely to be dependent on the worker for a certain level of performance.[126] Typically, this dependence is manifested in greater access to internal mobility opportunities as well as higher employee earnings.

Combined Effects of Employee Characteristics on Organizational Mobility

Labor market disadvantages tend to overlap, such that victims of racial discrimination are more likely to be poorly educated and to have inferior occupational attainments.[127] Another interaction occurs between race and/or ethnicity, and gender, such that minority females are underutilized more than either minority males or white females. Age also tends to compound existing racial and gender inequities, rendering the career potentials of older minority females more limited than that of other groups.[128]

The workforce of the future is expected to have increasing proportions of women and minorities, especially in low-skilled, entry-level positions. The over-representation of these groups in low-skilled, low-wage positions may be partly due to unequal career development opportunities. Many workers in these groups have additional career disadvantages such as limited employment experiences among displaced homemakers, and language problems among recent immigrants. Training efforts that would alleviate these disadvantages should not only enhance workers' career mobility, but also contribute to increasing corporate human capital and productivity.

Unionization

The role of labor unions in promoting worker career advancement was discussed earlier (Union-Sponsored Education and Training Programs, Joint Union-Management Training Programs). This section discusses the implications of unionization within a company and/or industry on the availability of upward mobility opportunities for disadvantaged and dislocated workers.

Union membership across all nonagricultural workers nationwide decreased from 35% in 1954 to 16.4% in 1989, so that union members currently represent "a small and declining share of the labor force."[129] At the same time, labor unions contribute critical energy and expertise in the design and implementation of many major upward mobility programs. Overall, workers employed by large firms are more likely to be unionized than are those employed by small firms. This is largely a function of economic scale; larger firms are characterized by high volumes of profits, assets and sales. Thus, they provide a greater incentive for workers to organize in order to obtain

their share of the economic "pie."[130] Moreover, once industrial markets become more concentrated, unions often collaborate with powerful employers to create higher entry barriers for nonunion sources of labor.[131]

Unionization may have two opposing effects on upward mobility. A greater proportion of workers covered by collective agreements within a firm typically increases the use of seniority versus ability as the chief promotion criterion. In some cases, this may stifle upward mobility opportunities within the firm. In the manufacturing sector, workers in craft unions were actually less likely to be promoted than were non-members.[132] Also, manufacturing and service businesses with greater percentages of workers in collective bargaining units tended to provide fewer upward mobility opportunities than those with fewer union workers.[133] These findings could be interpreted in a number of ways: union pressure to abide by the seniority criteria limited career mobility, or union activities are stronger in firms that provide little support for upgrade opportunities.

Finally, data from the early 1970s indicated that: (1) the overall effect of union membership was to reduce the amount of labor mobility throughout the economy; (2) the effect of union membership on job mobility depends upon type of union (industrial vs. craft) and type of job; (3) the mobility patterns of union and non-union workers converge over time; but (4) the advantages of union membership to workers tend to persist.[134]

D. CURRENT STATUS OF UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAMS IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

Availability of Programs

The training dollars U.S. businesses spend each year are in the billions; estimates range from $30 billion to $44 billion.[135] Much of the training covered by this effort must, either by design or in effect, contribute to the upward mobility of the workforce. Based on the limited amount of available information, the corporate training efforts appear to be unevenly distributed across industries and types of worker. Overall, 35% of workers across all industries report having had any type of work-based training in their current jobs.[136]

Considering even the higher U.S. training dollar estimate, $44 billion represents only 1.8% of all dollars spent in worker compensation in 1988. A few companies budgeted as much as 5% of their payroll for formal training, but many had no training budget at all.[137] Limited training efforts are particularly prevalent among small companies. In fact, the primary reason cited for insufficient corporate support for worker skills upgrade and career development is lack of resources.

Further, the training budget estimates cited above include all training by all types of companies for all types of workers. When the focus is narrowed to just service industries and low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, or dislocated workers, the extent of coverage appears very thin. Lastly, little is known about the prevalence or impact of other aspects of upward mobility programs such as career pathing and job rotation.

Companies With No Upward Mobility Programs

In general, companies with little or no upward mobility programs seem to lack many of the factors that contribute to successful program implementation and outcomes:[138] sufficient corporate resources and management support for the programs, union and worker involvement, and effective labor-management cooperation. In addition, insufficient financial resources of workers, low motivation, and the stigma and embarrassment attached to basic training in particular interfere with program success.

Companies that make no identifiable effort to promote skill and career upgrade of disadvantaged and dislocated workers generally embody characteristics that impede the establishment of programs. Typically, these are small businesses whose primary concern is survival in a tough, competitive business environment. Developing the productivity of their human resources is not a strategy many small companies consider.

Even some large companies, such as department store chains and those in the transportation industry, also seem to provide minimal upward mobility programs for low-skilled, entry-level workers. These may be due to the following factors:

- Low skill requirement of many service jobs,
- Relatively greater impact of recession on certain industries,
- Current availability of workers willing to accept low wages, and
- Lack of organizational structure in some industries (e.g., transportation) to support many different options for career enhancing mobility.

E. SUMMARY

Despite great diversity, a common characteristic shared by all disadvantaged workers are circumstances that predispose them to be unemployed or underutilized in the labor market. Low-skilled, economically disadvantaged workers often are restricted to jobs that require little or no training. The number of these jobs is expected to decrease in the coming decades. Dislocated workers who have been laid-off or forced to retire from their jobs are faced with the prospects of accepting lower wage jobs that often require a new set of skills. Both of these populations will require assistance as they prepare to join a more competitive workforce.

The defining characteristic of an upward mobility program is its emphasis on worker career development. Many programs consist largely of well-defined career ladders and managerial promotion policies. In large organizations with many levels, programs may be tied to an internal labor market, a formal organizational structure that includes practices intended to develop and maximize human resources and guide an orderly promotional upgrade of workers. Such a system benefits the organization by reducing costs related to personnel turnover and new-hire training and by increasing the expertise and commitment of workers. Benefits to workers include stable employment, acquisition of higher-order skills, and greater promotion opportunities.

Upward Mobility Programs

Upward mobility programs are often described in terms of basic and job-specific skills training. The content of these programs vary widely, even among so-called basic skills programs. Many programs offer combinations of job-specific and basic skills training, and often include interpersonal communication and computer literacy as part of the package. In addition to these two types of training, some firms provide opportunities for alternative career development, particularly in the environment of impending layoffs.

Traditionally, most employee training has been employer-sponsored, conducted on-site by in-house personnel, and intended for increasing corporate economic returns. In such cases, eligibility criteria are established by management and effectiveness is measured in terms of increased productivity. On-site training occurs by way of OJT, mentorship, apprenticeship, and on-site classes and seminars. These methods allow companies to capitalize on the use of experienced workers as trainers while reducing indirect costs to workers. In many cases, on-site training is conducted by external trainers. Also, there is growing interest in customizing generic training packages and in joint efforts by several companies to pool resources for training programs. Finally, the role of community colleges and vocational technical institutes in worker training is expanding, ranging from basic skills classes to company-specific training programs.

In addition to employer-sponsored programs, the scope of union-sponsored training is expanding to include worker skills upgrading. Expansion is seen in terms of a more sophisticated and broader range of contents and instructional methods and the use of specialized expertise of non-union trainers. Further, joint labor-management training programs are also becoming more prevalent, providing features not found in unilaterally sponsored programs. They include the pooling of financial and technical resources; management support coupled with worker involvement in, and acceptance of, the program; and broader training objectives reflecting benefits to both employers and employees.

The availability of upward mobility programs is influenced by a number of factors. External factors (such as employment-related legislation, domestic economic expansion and labor shortages, foreign trade, and technological competition), singly or in combination, can motivate business managers to retain their existing workforce by promoting the upgrading of skills. Among the intrinsic factors that affect the availability of upward mobility programs in organizations, size tends to be the prevailing ingredient. Large companies offer more upward mobility opportunities than small firms mainly due to greater training resources and organizational complexity allowing career movement.

Successful training programs at large companies are not easily transferrable to small firms. Currently, employees of small businesses tend to obtain their training off-the-job. Since the proportion of small businesses in the U.S. is growing, the combination of the above factors may lead to a general decrease in company-sponsored training and upward mobility opportunities of service workers.

The availability of upward mobility programs differs across service industries, largely because of differential growth rates and the extent of dependence on human capital. Rapidly expanding and labor-intensive industries, such as hospitality, are more often at the cutting edge of worker training and career development than those that are more capital intensive. The extent of upward mobility is also restricted in industries where the nature of required job skills differ substantially across occupational levels and categories.

The level of technology also affects the extent of upward mobility in a company. When an organization's technology involves a variety of simple, interchangeable tasks, little training is needed and promotion is based on seniority rather than performance. When technology requires highly complex and specialized skills, career advancement follows vertical movements within specific professional tracks. Technological changes may lead to significant organizational restructuring and required job skills. Such changes may increase or decrease career advancement opportunities for any given type of worker.

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PART III: FACTORS RELATED TO PROGRAM OUTCOMES

A. FACTORS RELATED TO PROGRAM SUCCESS

By definition, the factors associated with availability of upward mobility programs (discussed in Part II) can be interpreted as facilitators of viable programs. On the other hand, the following three factors seem to have direct and critical influence on program success:

- Company resources and management support for the programs;
- Labor/worker involvement; and
- Labor-management cooperation.

First and foremost, financial and personnel resources appear to be the baseline, enabling factor for upward mobility programs. The absolute dollar amount budgeted for this purpose varies greatly based on company size, type of program, type of worker, etc. Clearly, large companies with complex structures in an expanding industry are more likely to spend more to upgrade workers' skills and enhance their careers. Some of the innovative approaches, even in relatively better-off firms, involve capitalizing on external resources such as the JTPA recruitment and screening efforts to augment the corporate training budget.

In conversations with several JTPA Service Delivery Area directors, an inquiry was made as to the extent of involvement in the local Private Industry Council (PIC) activities by council members representing service industry firms. If the local industry is mainly service-oriented, the service firms tend to have a prominent share of representation on the Council and its activities. Such activities include training and hiring of JTPA participants.

The availability of a supportive corporate structure, such as a human resources and training department with a professional staff, is another factor that facilitates program success. In unionized firms, a critical factor in the success of programs is direct involvement of the labor representatives in every aspect of program design and implementation. This begins with the initial job task analysis and the development of career paths. The workers themselves may play a key role in conducting job task analyses of their current jobs.[1]

The existence of management support and labor or worker involvement does not necessarily guarantee that they agree on the specifics of upward mobility programs, such as eligibility and selection criteria, cost reimbursement, and work release issues. Thus, the final success factor is a cooperative working relationship between labor and management to formulate the most mutually beneficial program options. AT&T and The Alliance is an exemplary case of such a partnership; the Omni Hotel in Baltimore, MD, also illustrates the process in which such a partnership was developed out of a rather problematic relationship in the past.

A fairly new approach to employee development that is becoming popular among smaller firms involves pooling of training resources and/or supporting a training and development program shared by many smaller firms. Further, many are sponsored by joint labor/management efforts. Other programs are developed by national trade associations and offered to member companies. Some are listed below:

- The Skills Enhancement Training (SET) Program, developed by the Food & Beverage Workers Union, Local 32, in Washington, DC is an example of a joint labor-management effort. Fourteen companies participate in the shared basic skills development program.

- Another example comes from a joint effort by two labor unions and three companies in the health care industry with technical assistance from the AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI) and the Service Employees' International Union. The three health care institutions are piloting training programs for selected occupations. The programs are intended to enable workers to upgrade their skills and move up the career ladder and to provide the participating companies with much needed trained technical staff.

- Another example in which multiple companies utilize similar resources for training and development does not include union involvement. The American Institute for Banking (AIB), the education branch of the American Banking Association, provides educational programs to member banks lacking the needed resources, both financial and personnel, for such services. Basic and job-specific skills training, as well as degree programs, are offered. While the program does not guarantee upward mobility in the individual banks, positive effects of the training have been witnessed in the employees' advancement records.

These examples point to an emerging practice of smaller companies to provide training and development opportunities to their workers in creative and effective ways. Without such strategies, it would be very difficult for less affluent firms to compete effectively in their respective markets.

B. IMPEDIMENTS TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND SUCCESS

Impediments to a program's implementation and, ultimately, to its success fall into four broad categories: (1) employee attitude; (2) program characteristic; (3) organizational culture, and (4) industry-specific labor market characteristics.

Employee Attitude

Employed Workers

Many employed workers fail to take advantage of opportunities for education, skills training, and career enhancing job transfers. Attending training courses often requires substantial commitment of workers' "own time." In the case of economically disadvantaged workers who may supplement their main income with another part-time job, just the time requirement, not to speak of the effort required to learn new materials and skills, may be overwhelming. They may need to pay all or part of tuition and fees. In addition, they may incur extra expenses in transportation and child care due to participating in training.

In many remedial basic education courses, the perceived stigma attached to these courses discourages many workers, especially older ones.[2] A training specialist stated, "In some companies you have new immigrants that learned English as their second language in their own

country, but they don't have any motivation to go back to the classroom because they think they understand well enough. There is often no motivation for the American semi-literate worker to go back to the classroom and face 'failure' once again like they did in the lower grades."[3]

If the workers cannot expect clearly beneficial outcomes from the programs, many will lack motivation to improve their job skills in general. In some cases, workers in semi-skilled occupations (e.g., wage-grade workers in public utilities companies) find that upward mobility training may bring a promotion to the supervisory level but no increase in pay since they would no longer be eligible to receive "time-and-a-half" pay for overtime work. Faced with a situation in which career status is not matched with a concomitant wage or salary increase, many would prefer to stay in wage-level positions.[4]

Dislocated Workers

The loss of one's job has been shown to result in feelings of low self-esteem, inadequacy, increased stress, somatic complaints, and depression.[5] Taken as a whole, these symptoms often manifest in the form of resistance on the part of workers to training and other interventions designed to relocate them in the workforce.

Based on a sample of 650 dislocated workers in 1984, worker resistance was one of the major obstacles to the implementation of JTPA-funded career counseling programs.[6] Worker resistance was characterized by "enmeshment" in the former job, the expectation for immediate employment, negative sentiments towards employment agencies and career assessment devices, and refusal to attend free job-search workshops and support groups.

Reactions to dislocation often involve two stages. The first stage is one of job loss that comprises the sentiments of shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. The second stage is job search burnout, involving initial enthusiasm followed by stagnation, frustration and apathy.[7] In order to work effectively with dislocated workers, employment and training officials must be sensitive to the stage which workers are currently experiencing. Failure to do so often results in dislocated workers' ceasing to seek employment altogether, thus falling under the DOL category of "discouraged workers."[8]

A 1987 study of dislocated workers enrolled in JTPA Title III training programs found that a worker's life stage was a significant factor in coloring the initial reactions to "returning to school" as well as their general feelings about the experience.[9] Overall, middle-aged workers (aged 36 to 49) held more negative sentiments concerning training than persons in the younger or pre-retirement groups.

Attrition

Negative worker attitudes frequently translate into high rates of program attrition. This is a major impediment to program success. Moreover, "attrition rates associated with career interventions appear to be even higher than for individual counseling."[10] Often workers who decide to drop out are those most in need of career intervention. They tend to engage in significantly fewer job-search activities and report lower self-esteem than non-drop-outs.

Often the features of a given program interact with worker apathy, thus contributing to even higher rates of attrition. In a study of college women, over 50% of those enrolled in career development workshops dropped out at some point during their enrollment.[11] Reasons given for not attending included length of the sessions, unmet expectations, boredom with pretesting, forgetfulness, and scheduling conflicts. When the program was modified to allow students greater flexibility in test-taking and to reduce the waiting period for test results to 10 days, attrition was reduced by 9%.[12] Similarly, restrictive scheduling of required tests, length of the waiting period between test-taking and feedback, and the number of workshop sessions also appear to be reasons for career workshop attrition.[13]

Organizational Culture and Management Attitude

The term "organizational culture" refers to the composite of environmental factors both internal and external to the organization that affect the quality of work life within the organization. Examples of internal factors that represent organizational culture include quality of relationships between co-workers, and between workers and their supervisor, and policies and procedures developed by management. External factors include the amount of competition in the marketplace for services provided and customer demand for services.

Representatives of the AFL-CIO view the issue of worker training as a political one in terms of the need to strike a balance between management and worker control.[14] Training both empowers and enables workers to assume responsibility for issues traditionally considered to be the unique purview of management, such as providing quality control and monitoring productivity.[15] As these activities become no longer solely management's responsibility, the managers' control over the workplace dissipates. Lack of management support for this expanded role of workers constitutes a major barrier to workplace education.

C. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM IMPACT

There are two broad perspectives from which program outcomes may be viewed: as individual outcomes within the organization, and as organizational outcomes.[16] While there is considerable interdependence between the two, for the purpose of this report they will be discussed separately.

Individual Worker Outcomes

At the individual level, program success can be assessed both in terms of the psychological and pecuniary returns to training. Frequently, these are assessed behaviorally, through the appraisal of employees' job performances. One of the most important aspects of intra-organizational mobility is its influence on employees' work behavior.[17]

Opportunities for advancement affect not only workers' orientation towards the organization but also toward the work itself. Employees who feel that their mobility aspirations have been fulfilled show higher levels of organizational commitment, involvement, and motivation. Consequently, one of the key benefits of basic skills training is improved employee morale.[18] Further, because they are more satisfied with their work and with the work roles they occupy, their role within the organization often becomes a central aspect of their self-identity. On a practical basis, this translates into lower levels of absenteeism and turnover.[19]

Employment security differs from simple job security in terms of its more comprehensive scope. Employment security refers to workers' security in possessing valuable skills that may be marketed effectively in both external and internal labor markets. In contrast, job security is limited to the guarantee of a position within a given firm. This could mean that an employee is "guaranteed" a dead-end job. However, employment security involves marketability of workers' skills.[20] Upward mobility is related more to issues concerned with employment security. Training and development programs that enhance the workers' skills provide increased employment security beyond that associated with a given job.

Organizational Outcomes

Economic gain is often the driving incentive for a firm to sponsor an upward mobility program for its "disadvantaged" and low-skilled employees. For example, hiring job applicants through referrals by government-funded employment programs greatly reduces recruiting costs for Guest Quarters Suite Hotels.[21] Moreover, the "disadvantaged" applicants who pass the Guest Quarters' rigorous screening process and complete the training are more motivated and loyal to their jobs than workers with less disadvantaged backgrounds.

Theoretically, increased labor productivity is the ultimate goal of any employee training program. However, the stated objectives of some programs are more general. For example, most basic skills training is designed to improve the general abilities of workers which is believed to facilitate their productivity. On the other hand, specific job skills training may be expected to have direct impact on the work unit productivity.

Internal labor markets have been demonstrated to be an important means for maximizing employee retention.[22] Turnover is both a management inconvenience and a significant expense. The cost of losing an already trained employee and hiring and training a new one is substantially greater than the cost of maintaining the initial employee. Thus, employers use various incentives to retain their valued employees.

D. SUMMARY

While the availability of upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers remains limited, there is evidence of a growing interest in the service industries to promote such efforts. The major factors contributing to the success of existing upward mobility programs are: (1) company resources (both financial and human resources staff) and management support for the programs; (2) labor/worker involvement (including commitment of additional personal resources, and personal and professional rewards); (3) labor-management cooperation; and (4) factors affecting organizational climate. Thus, any existing program is a product of a complex interplay among many contributing factors that are unique to that program.

NOTES

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3. Moore, 8 August 1991.

4. Byrd, 26 July 1991.

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21. R. Foley, Guest Quarters Suite Hotels, SME interview, 9 August 1991.

22. W. Bridges and W. Villemer, On the Institutionalization of Job Security: Internal Labor Markets and Their Corporate Environments (Unpublished paper, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1982).

PART IV: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This report addressed the following issues:

- The types of firms in the service sector that are likely to have upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers;
- General characteristics of programs;
- Factors related to program success and how they may vary by type of firm; and
- Factors that hinder the development of upward mobility programs.

This concluding section presents the summary of findings and discusses issues involved in evaluating the effectiveness of upward mobility programs and issues requiring further consideration.

A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, disadvantaged and dislocated workers in the service sector continue to have limited access to training and career development opportunities. Program participation is often contingent on the availability of public funding, namely JTPA monies allocated to train these groups of workers. Further, within the service sector, the extent and availability of upward mobility programs for these workers varies considerably by industry.

What Types of Upward Mobility Programs Exist?

While worker training programs are often discussed in terms of job-specific skills training versus basic skills training, program content varies greatly, even among so-called "basic skills" programs. Increasingly, skills in interpersonal communication and computer literacy are considered part of basic skills, even for persons occupying relatively low-skilled, entry-level jobs. Honing workers' communication and interpersonal skills, in addition to updating their technological skills, is particularly emphasized in service industries such as hotels and restaurants in which employee-client interaction is a crucial aspect of the product. Many programs combine job-specific and basic skills training. This minimizes the problem of having workers who are unable to benefit from opportunities for skill upgrading due to inadequate basic skills. In addition, some firms provide opportunities for alternative career development; this occurs particularly in environments of impending layoffs.

Some upward mobility programs consist largely of well-defined career ladders and promotion management policies. Formal career ladder programs are more often found in service industries in which employee-client interaction is the "product," or at least an integral aspect of it (e.g., hotels), as opposed to industries in which employees and clients are relatively detached (e.g., trucking).

Along with the contents of upward mobility programs, sponsorship of programs has also expanded. Traditionally, most employee training has been employer-sponsored, conducted on-site by in-house personnel, and primarily intended to increase companies' economic returns. Over time, union-sponsored training programs began to expand their activities from those aimed at developing collective bargaining skills to include the following new features: skills upgrading for disadvantaged and dislocated workers; use of non-union trainers; and inclusion of sophisticated, broad-range academic and technical instructions and methods. More recently, efforts to develop joint labor-management training programs provide features not found in programs sponsored by either party alone. These features include pooling financial and technical resources; management support coupled with worker involvement in, and acceptance of, the program; and broader training objectives reflecting benefits to both employers and employees.

The wide variation in the contents of upward mobility programs are also reflected in the range of program operations including different methods, places, and trainers. Most employer-sponsored formal training takes place on-site through OJT, mentorship, apprenticeship, and on-site classes and seminars. These methods allow companies to capitalize on the use of experienced workers as trainers and reduce training-related costs to trainees (e.g., transportation time and expenses). In many cases, on-site training is conducted by external trainers from private training firms, proprietary schools, unions, educational institutions, and trade associations.

Some of the newer approaches include the application of generic training packages customized to specific company's training needs, and joint efforts among several companies to pool resources for the sharing of training programs. The role of community colleges and vocational technical institutes in worker training is expanding and ranges from courses in basic skills to company-specific training programs.

What Types of Service Firms Provide Upward Mobility Programs?

This question was examined in terms of various organizational characteristics that are related to the availability of programs. Factors such as type of industry, size of business, corporate structure, growth rate, type of occupations, technology, workforce age and grade ratio, unionization, and employee demographics were initially considered independently of one another. However, the complex relationships among many of these factors soon emerged. For instance, the critical factors regarding the type of industry are not the actual products or services that companies sell. Instead, the availability of upward mobility programs is related to industry type based on their relationship to characteristics such as size, growth rates, labor- versus capital-intensive operations, corporate structure, and occupational groups employed.

Among these interrelated factors, company size seems to have an overriding influence on the availability and success of upward mobility programs. Large companies offer more upward mobility opportunities than small firms, due to greater training resources and a more complex organizational structure, which allows for greater career movement. In addition, it is difficult to transfer successful training programs from large companies to small firms. Finally, employees of small businesses tend to obtain their training off the job. Thus, as the proportion of jobs in small businesses grows, there may be a general decrease -- or, at least, not an increase -- in company-sponsored training economy-wide.

In general, growing organizations provide better promotional opportunities by increasing the ratio of supply to demand of organizational positions. However, the effect of growth rate on career mobility is lessened in smaller firms with limited resources and simpler organizational structure.

Organizational complexity tends to be related to size; more complex companies tend to be larger and have greater training resources. Multiple-branch organizations offer more job transfer options and can capitalize on internal labor market practices. However, overall corporate size and multiple-branch structure do not necessarily translate into career upgrade opportunities for low-skilled workers. There are large, nationwide companies consisting of local branches that are extremely "simple" in structure (e.g., fast food franchises) which limits upward mobility potential for most workers. The extent of upward mobility is also restricted in industries such as the airline industry in which job skills are compartmentalized within discrete occupational levels and/or categories.

Promotional opportunities are greater in relatively older, top-heavy organizations since the retirement of older workers in higher positions creates vacancies. This yields greater promotional opportunities for younger persons in lower and entry-level positions. Based on the expected shifts in the labor market demographics for the coming decades, the U.S. workforce will become older, even with a sizeable economic growth and an increase in number of jobs. This forecast alone would predict a healthy career mobility outlook for young, entry-level workers. However, this basic scenario will be complicated by factors such as major corporate downsizing and technological changes leading to new job skills requirements for both older and younger workers.

Unionization occurs mostly in larger companies. Labor unions provide critical energy and expertise in the implementation of many major upward mobility programs and program designs that result in benefits to workers as well as the companies. The overall effect of unionization also includes a potential to limit worker mobility. A greater proportion of workers covered by collective agreements within a firm typically increases the use of seniority versus ability as the chief promotion criterion. In some cases, this may stifle upward mobility opportunities for capable, young workers.

Other characteristics that may affect career mobility are the primary technological base of a company, average worker age, and employee demographic characteristics. These operate relatively independent of the other characteristics.

When an organization's technology involves a variety of simple interchangeable tasks, little training is needed, and promotion is based on seniority rather than performance. Where the technology requires highly complex and specialized skills, career advancement follows vertical movements within specific professional tracks. Technological changes may lead to significant organizational restructuring and new required job skills. Such changes may either increase or decrease career advancement opportunities for any given type of worker.

Related to the organization's technological base is the extent of its dependence on human capital. For labor-intensive industries, such as the hospitality industry, customer-oriented service is the firm's product. This type of industry tends to be at the cutting edge of worker training and career development.

Characteristics of workers such as age, gender, race and ethnicity, education, and job tenure are also found to influence upward mobility potential. Moreover, labor market disadvantages tend to overlap and place extreme limitations for certain worker groups. For example, minority workers are likely to be less educated and to have lower occupational attainments as a group. The over-representation of these groups in the low-skilled, low-wage positions may be partly due to unequal career development opportunities. Many workers in these groups have additional career disadvantages such as limited employment experiences among displaced homemakers and language problems among recent immigrants. Training efforts that would alleviate these disadvantages should not only enhance workers' career mobility but also contribute to increasing their human capital and overall productivity.

Factors external to a company add to the complex interplay of organizational factors that influence the availability and success of upward mobility programs. Singly or in combination, factors such as employment-related legislation, domestic economic expansion and labor shortages, or foreign trade and technological competition serve as catalysts for businesses to provide internal career development opportunities to retain existing workers.

In summary, no single organizational characteristic provides a sufficient explanation for the likelihood that a firm will have an upward mobility program. Firms that have a formal upward mobility program and internal labor market infrastructure tend to be large, well-resourced, structurally complex, labor-intensive, and open to employee/union inputs. Moreover, they tend to be located in service industries marked by a high level of external competition.

What Types of Workers Are Targeted for Upward Mobility Programs?

In general, many programs implemented by businesses for employee "upward mobility" focus on management training of workers who are neither low-skilled, economically disadvantaged, nor dislocated. Rather, they already possess the requisite educational credentials and employment experience to place them on an advanced technical managerial track. Searching for training programs specifically aimed at the target population of this report resulted in relatively few instances of clear-cut "findings." However, examples of such programs do exist: The Dayton Hudson mentorship program for teenage mothers who are referred from social service agencies, the Guest Quarters career development program for workers recruited through JTPA Title II-A and Title III programs, and the AT&T/Alliance retraining and transition support efforts for workers expecting major corporate downsizing.

Many of the upward mobility programs are targeted toward entry-level workers, regardless of whether they represent economically disadvantaged or dislocated workers. This is particularly the case with programs which consist primarily of well-structured systems of career ladders and promotional policies. To the extent that these programs apply to all employees, including those entering unskilled jobs (e.g., dish washers, hotel housekeeping), they are likely to serve the target population of this report.

What Factors Facilitate or Impede Program Success? How Do These Factors Influence Program Outcomes?

Many factors external and internal to the organization or specific to individual workers affect the availability of upward mobility programs. Further, three general conditions seem important in

successful programs: (1) availability of adequate training resources (financial and personnel) and management support of the training program; (2) labor and/or worker involvement in the design and implementation of training programs; and (3) joint labor-management cooperation in program design and operation.

Factors that detract from intended program outcomes include: extra demands placed on trainees'/workers' time and finances, the perceived stigma attached to remedial training, and a lack of monetary rewards resulting from training. For many dislocated workers, low self-esteem and increased emotional stress associated with a layoff may lead to their resistance to training and other support services.

What Are the Program Outcomes for Employees? For Employers?

At the individual worker level, program success can be examined both in terms of psychological and monetary returns from training. These are often assessed behaviorally, for example, through worker job performance. Opportunities for advancement affect not only workers' orientation toward the organization but also toward the work itself, manifested through increased morale and job commitment. Training and development programs that enhance the workers' skills provide increased employment security (i.e., the guarantee that workers' skills and experience will secure continued employment, either in the internal or external labor market) and job security (i.e., the guarantee of continued employment with the firm).

For the employer, the objective for upward mobility programs is economic gain. Theoretically, increased labor productivity is the ultimate goal of any employee training program. However, employers look for less direct indicators of productivity gains such as an increase in basic skills, reduced expenses of recruiting and training new hires resulting from lower personnel turnover, and increased quality and expertise of workers (resulting from lower turnover and continued training).

B. PROGRAM EVALUATION: KEY ISSUES

In addition to the relative paucity of upward mobility programs in the service industry as a whole, efforts to assess the effectiveness of existing programs present major challenges. What are the appropriate criteria for determining whether or not an upward mobility program is successful? There is considerable debate concerning what to measure, and, once identified, how to measure it.[1] This section highlights some of the key issues and approaches taken to evaluate the effectiveness of upward mobility programs. Further discussion of these issues is presented in Volume II.

Subjectivity and lack of standardization characterize many commonly-used measures of program impact.[2] In the case of jointly sponsored upward mobility programs, the ambiguity in measures may reflect competing concerns of various parties whose interests lie "not in any one outcome but in a range of outcomes including the effects on organizational performance and on job security and career opportunities."[3]

Currently, little systematic research has been conducted that documents the economic returns to upward mobility programs. "While hundreds of millions are spent annually on employee development and training, a review of the academic practitioner literature reveals little attempt to

measure increases in trainee income or employer profits from training expenditures."[4] This may be attributed to three sources of measurement difficulty: the difficulty of identifying training objectives common to a variety of factors involved in training decisions, interdisciplinary conflicts regarding what to measure and how, and technical difficulties in producing rate-of-return estimates.[5] Additional difficulty is the perception by training managers that the costs of obtaining such information exceed the benefits.[6]

C. ISSUES NEEDING FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Although some exemplary cases of upward mobility programs are found among expanding service sector industries, the pervasive nature of limited access by the disadvantaged and dislocated workers to career mobility opportunities should be at the forefront of policy decisions related to workforce productivity and welfare. The problem of worker training may be a structural one such that only large-scale systemic changes can succeed to ultimately reverse this difficulty.[7] This would involve a restructuring of the nation's overall job-related learning network, which is presently both inadequate and unevenly distributed (i.e., concentrated among professionals and managers).

Many questions and issues remain to be addressed in order to adjust worker training to the shifts in the domestic and international market place and in the workforce itself. Additional inquiries are needed to address questions such as:

- What are the returns to various types of career ladder programs, and when are they available to employees?
- Who should be responsible for worker training and cost accountability?
- What will be the structure and business strategy of organizations in the future and the role of training and development to support them?
- Conversely, what changes in the organizational structure and policies will be needed to support skills and career development of disadvantaged and dislocated workers?
- What are the most critical and appropriate measures for assessing the effectiveness of specific upward mobility programs?

Furthermore, information presented in this report suggests several avenues for enhancing private sector efforts, and government support of such efforts, to develop upward mobility programs. They are summarized below.

1. **Innovative strategies need to be explored by the private sector to overcome the lack of resources for worker training**. Lack of adequate resources is cited repeatedly as the main barrier to program implementation, especially among small businesses. While the economic situations of these firms are not likely to change quickly, innovative strategies to maximize resources should be explored. Examples of such strategies include:

- Pooling resources by a consortium of businesses to develop training programs that can be offered to workers in similar positions from all participating companies;

- Computer assisted training that reduces cost of instructors and provides greater flexibility of when and where training is conducted;

- Interfacing worker training with government-funded pre-employment programs such as JTPA and JOBS to capitalize on public funding of recruitment and applicant screening costs; and

- Collaborative efforts among related businesses, education and training organizations, and public employment training programs to maximize available resources and prevent "reinventing the wheel."

2. **Corporations need to promote a positive organizational culture including worker attitude about training and management support for training programs.** Fear of a stigma attached to remedial training, demands on workers' time and personal finances, and the lack of rewards associated with training are key factors contributing to workers' reluctance to participate in training programs to upgrade their skills. The following strategies would encourage program participation and success:

   - Incorporate worker and/or union input in the design, implementation, and/or administration of worker training programs;

   - Ensure dissemination of information on available training and career ladder policies to workers in the target worker groups;

   - Link training completion with promotion opportunities, increased earnings, or other forms of benefits; and

   - Provide ancillary support to minimize the cost of participating in training to workers (e.g., child care, on-site training to reduce needs for transportation costs and demands on workers' "own time").

3. **Federal government support for information dissemination, innovative program approaches, and evaluation research will enhance private sector efforts to expand upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers.** Specific areas of support include the following:

   - Systematic compilation of information on skills and career development training and dissemination to businesses and the education/training community;

   - Information sharing among businesses through organizations such as local Private Industry Councils (PICs), such government agencies as the Small Business Administration, relevant private sector organizations, and trade associations;

   - Promoting labor/management collaboration on the design and implementation of training programs in industries and organizations with labor unions;

- Funding for demonstration projects to implement innovative upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers, particularly in small and mid-sized businesses, and dissemination of information on the results;

- Funding to leverage collaborative/consortium efforts among businesses;

- Funding to extend training and job placement activities of JTPA in support of training for upward mobility;

- Policies that provide incentives (such as tax credits) for employee training in order to promote employer-supported upward mobility programs; and

- Evaluation research to assess the effectiveness of upward mobility programs for disadvantaged and dislocated workers in service industries.

Service industries face tremendous challenges to take new and leading roles in restoring and maintaining the health of the U.S. economy. Currently, efforts to upgrade the productivity of low-skilled workers and to enhance their career opportunities are limited. However, there is an increasing awareness in the private and public sectors of the need to improve this situation. This report provides information on the current status of these programs, identifies factors related to successful program implementation, and describes exemplary programs that pave the way for others to follow.

NOTES

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